

**“We’re making a difference to the lives of our
students”**

Learning Communities in Physical Education

By Sue McBain

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Abstract

This qualitative case study combined teacher and student interviews with observations of one physical education class to facilitate understandings of physical education learning communities. Watkins' (2005) definition of a learning community was used as a framework to conceptualise the study. I found that physical education teachers in this study do actively develop their classes as learning communities. Five key findings are discussed.

Physical education learning communities exist in a number of different forms that can be related to a learning community continuum. The learning community's positioning on the continuum is directly related to student agency in learning. It was found that student agency is promoted through a discourse of inquiry. In this study inquiry is a central tenet of a learning community as learning is viewed as a cognitive and socio-cultural constructivist function resulting in knowledge generation (Brown, 1997 cited in Alton Lee 2003; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005). As inquiry learning is a social process in a learning community, it is concurrently supported by a discourse of community, promoting students' ability to work altruistically and collaboratively, learning together.

It was found that the explicit teaching of socio-moral outcomes through socio-cultural pedagogies enhance positive peer relationships and is essential to the promotion of an altruistic discourse of community. The discourses of community and inquiry are dialectically related and communicate clear messages to students about the expectations of behaviour and learning within an altruistic community.

The early stages of a physical education learning community are based on the genuine and altruistic student-teacher relationships which provide a springboard to allow opportunities for teachers to have further conversations about learning.

Finally, evidence in the study suggests that philosophy plays a significant role in both the growth and oppression of the evolution of a learning community. This study suggests that the relationship between the philosophy of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (2007), the physical education teachers and the economic neoliberal context influences the development of learning communities in physical education.

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Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	ii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	iii
Contents	iv
Chapter One: Introduction	1
1. Topic and aims of the study.....	1
2. Researcher interest in the study.....	2
3. Researcher presence, positioning and bias.....	2
4. Context of the study.....	4
5. Research questions.....	8
6. The significance of the study.....	8
7. Definition of terms	9
8. Limitations	10
Chapter Two: Literature review	13
1. What is a learning community?	13
2. Teachers use class sessions to value diversity, to establish and build community.....	26
3. The teacher represents 'us' as everyone in our learning community.....	27
4. Socio-moral development as a foundation to community	27
5. Developing community through the socio-moral.	30
6. The tasks of a learning community: creating learning activities for learning communities.	31
7. The role of the teacher: teachers as facilitators of learning	44
8. Synthesising it all: Inter-related entities and activity systems within physical education classes.	48
Chapter Three: Methodology	52
Introduction	52
1. Theoretical underpinnings.	52
2. Research design	55
3. Methodology	57
3d. Research instruments	60
4. Ethical implications	63
5. Analysis.....	66
Chapter Four: Findings of the study	71
Part One: Physical education teachers establishing learning communities	71
1. Activities and entities of a community.....	72
2. Activities and entities of a learning community	73
Part two: Relationships as the foundations of a learning community:	79

1. Building student teacher relationships within a community	79
2. Diversity.....	87
3. Participant roles in a community.....	90
Part three: Learning activities promoting community: learning about the social and social learning ..	94
1. Learning about the social: the explicit teaching of attitudes and values	94
2. Socio-cultural and social learning pedagogies.....	96
Part 4 Findings: Philosophy to practice	102
1. “We are about people.” Humanist philosophies in physical education.....	102
2. Physical education as a contributor to community.....	104
3. Philosophical constructs hindering the development of a learning community.....	105
Chapter Five: Discussion on physical education teachers establishing learning communities	108
1. Physical education classes as learning communities: Activities and entities of a community.....	108
2. Activities and entities contributing to a learning community discourse	112
Chapter Six: Discussion on relationships as the foundation of a learning community:.....	122
1. Relationships as the foundations of a learning community.....	122
2. Addressing diversity and sense of belonging as an ethic of care building class relationships	131
3. The participant roles in a community.	136
Chapter Seven: Discussion on learning activities promoting a learning community: learning about the social and social learning	141
1. Learning about altruistic physical education learning communities: learning about the social.....	141
2. Socio-cultural and social learning pedagogies.....	144
3. Social learning model and methods	148
4. Alternative definitions of success in physical education	149
Chapter eight: Discussion on philosophy to practice	152
1. “We are about people” Humanist philosophies in physical education.....	152
2. Physical Education as a contributor to community	155
3. Philosophical constructs hindering the development of a learning community.....	156
Chapter Nine: Conclusion	161
Part 1. Reflecting on the journey	161
1. The research process	162
2. Answering the research questions.....	162
Part two: mapping the journey forward.....	167
Final comment	170
Appendices	172

<i>Appendix 1</i>	172
<i>Appendix 2</i>	176
<i>Appendix 3</i>	182
<i>Bibliography</i>	184

Chapter One: Introduction

The first chapter of a thesis is significant as it is the beginning, background and preparation for the thesis journey. In this introduction an explanation of the topic and aims of the study is outlined, which is followed by an explanation of my interest in the topic of physical education learning communities. At this point consideration of my researcher positioning and biases is also given. It is relevant that the introduction includes discussion about the background context of the study which includes some reflection on the implementation of the *1999 Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum (HPE)*, now superseded by the *2007 New Zealand Curriculum (NZC)*. This is particularly pertinent as the perceived barriers to the implementation of the *HPE (1999)* were a catalyst for undertaking this study. There is an explicit relationship between the research questions and the background of the study which is consequently explored along with how this study is significant to the physical education profession. Finally a definition of terms is provided to ensure all readers interpret and understand terms in a consistent manner throughout the thesis, which is followed by a brief discussion about the limitations of the study.

1. Topic and aims of the study

This qualitative case study combined teacher and student interviews with observations of a physical education learning community to facilitate the development of understandings of **how physical education teachers establish learning communities**. The aims of the study included ascertaining if teachers of physical education develop their classes as learning communities and consequent exploration the discourses associated with the evolution of a physical education learning community. Alternatively, to explore discourses which hinder the development of physical education learning communities was also relevant. I began the study with the belief that the development of physical education classes as a community (defined as altruistic behaviours contributing to the social environment of the class) would allow teachers to implement socio-cultural/critical pedagogies necessary for improved learning opportunities of the socio-critical content of the *NZC (2007)*. This was motivated by a desire to understand what physical education teachers actually do to

develop classes to the point where teachers are able to empower students to take responsibility for their own and others' learning, enabling teachers to utilise a range of participatory, socio-cultural and inquiry based pedagogies. With input from the academic literature the aims of study expanded to encompass understandings of learning within a community.

As I disseminate the findings of the study I hope to provide in-service and pre-service physical education teachers with a vision of the possibilities and opportunities available for developing classes as learning communities. It is envisaged that understanding the essential constructs and discourses related to the development of a learning community will provide some guidance and understanding of strategies teachers could use to extend learning opportunities in physical education for students.

2. Researcher interest in the study

This investigation was of intense interest to me as a physical education teacher educator as I am strongly committed to quality physical education teaching and learning. I believe it is a subject that has the potential to make a significant difference to the lives of young people due to its socio-critical humanist philosophical positioning and associated teaching and learning processes. In my position as a teacher educator at the University of Canterbury I bring a passion and responsibility to develop understandings of quality physical education teaching and learning, and to facilitate pre-service physical education students' understandings of the same topic. It was with this end in mind that I began this journey

3. Researcher presence, positioning and bias

There are many opportunities for a "researcher's personal influence to affect qualitative research" (Neuman, 1997, p. 332). "Researcher presence is always an explicit issue" (Neuman, 1997, p. 334) as they view the world as an embodied consciousness constructed through feelings, experiences and perspectives which interpret human life (Shilling, 2003). Therefore rather than hiding behind the "objective techniques" it is important that the qualitative researcher acknowledges

values and biases, promotes honesty and allows the reader to understand the researchers' subjectivities (Bogden & Biklen, 2007; Neuman, 1997). It is important that I am reflective of my subjectivities and biases to allow the reader to take these into account when reading the thesis (Bogden & Biklen, 2007).

As previously mentioned I am a teacher educator who is passionate about the purposes, possibilities and opportunities physical education offers individuals and the community. I believe that if the *NZC (2007)* is implemented coherently, the promotion of the socio-critical humanist philosophy has the potential to make a difference to the lives of students and to the wider community. This is consistent with my understanding that it is not the role of physical education to improve the performance of individuals as part of their journey to representative sport (Laker, 2000) although teachers can provide direction and support to individuals this path. I believe that physical education's role in schools is to facilitate students understanding of the movement culture and how it can contribute to individual and societal wellbeing, helping to develop healthy communities.

The researcher must be self aware and remain aware of her biases and positioning (Bogden & Biklen, 2007) and this enables a reflexive awareness of subjectivity, objectivity and empathetic neutrality which can create balance (Bogden & Biklen, 2007; Patton, 2002). Due to my positioning previously mentioned, I have affinity for the teachers in this study's "way of being" in physical education. My biases and positioning will have biased participant selection, interpretation and analysis of the data and I acknowledge this. As a physical education teacher educator I had my own perceptions and assumptions about how to develop a physical education community. In spite of and due to my acknowledgement of this positioning, I have sought to find ways to remain balanced, open and to present the teachers' and students' views as honestly as possible while maintain awareness of my subjectivities.

So far in mapping the journey for this thesis I have included a brief description of the topic and aim of the study, discussed my interest in the study and exposed my

positioning and biases. From this point forward, the discussion will move away from personal influences and turn towards the wider context the investigation.

4. Context of the study

The implementation of the *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum (1999)* is explored as a context and catalyst for this research. The underlying socio-critical humanism of the *HPE (1999)* and consequently the *NZC (2007)* is of particular interest as it has a synergistic relationship with the philosophy required to precipitate the development of a learning community.

The *HPE (1999)* was gazetted and its delivery in schools became compulsory in 1999. The implementation of this curriculum was characterised by “debate and pedagogical upheaval” (Stothart, 2000, p. 1). The writers of the *HPE (1999)* created a document which required a substantial paradigm shift (Stothart, 2000), as socio-critical humanism was in sharp contrast to physical education teaching characterised by a scientised or a technocratic view (Culpan, 1996/97). Through the use of science, physical education teachers reduced the knowledge of humans and their bodies to machine like ‘facts’ about human performance (Dewar, 1990). This reliance on science had led to a significant focus on performance pedagogy, valuing “the ability of teachers to produce physically skilled performers” (Laker, 2000). This technocratic teaching is based on the assumption that physical education is seen as an important contributor to the goals of producing physically skilled performers in a neoliberal society where winning is paramount in both business and in sport (Laker, 2000). This dominant view was accepted by many without critique. This is the paradigm I began my teaching career within and technocratic imperatives did not sit well with my humanist ideals.

The *HPE (1999)* was implemented in a contested educational terrain generated by the development of the socio-critical humanist curriculum within a neoliberal political context. According to Richard Tinning a neo liberal view of education is based on a “job slots” view (Tinning, Kirk, & Evans, 1993 cited in Culpan 2004) where the

demands of the marketplace and international competitiveness directed “that education is viewed as a commodity to be traded” (Culpan, 2004, p. 227).

A neoliberal view of education was contrary to the beliefs of those consulted in physical education community and consequently the writers of the *HPE (1999)* developed a curriculum with socio-critical humanist underpinnings which promoted personal and social development.

Ten years later, the *HPE (1999)* has been only slightly reshaped and has been subsumed virtually unaltered into the *NZC (2007)*. The socio-critical humanist positioning of physical education has not been diminished as evidenced by the essence statements; “[students] learn to... relate positively to others and demonstrate constructive attitudes and values...” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 23).

Through learning and by accepting challenges in health related and movement contexts, students reflect on the nature of wellbeing and how to promote it. As they develop resilience and a sense of personal and social responsibility, they are increasingly able to take responsibility for themselves and contribute to the wellbeing of those around them, of their communities, of their environments (including natural environments) and of the wider society (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 22).

The critical positioning of the *NZC (2007)* is evident in the essence statement:

It fosters critical thinking and action and enables students to understand the role and significance of physical activity for individuals and society (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 23)

The *HPE (1999)* and subsequently the *NZC (2007)* provides physical education teachers with the vision, leadership and opportunity to move to a humanistic socio-critical model, embracing the notion of learning holistically about the many diverse aspects of the movement culture (Ministry of Education, 2007). It has a humanist goal of arming students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to contribute to the development of healthy and socially just communities.

On reflection it seems that the implementation of the *HPE (1999)* and recently the *NZC (2007)* has had mixed results. Anecdotal evidence suggests that while some schools have embraced the intent of the curriculum wholeheartedly and developed programmes of learning that are holistic, socio-critical and meaningful to their students, many have only made superficial changes to their practices, preferring to retain the traditional technocratic skills based programmes. This has created an epistemological conflict between the positioning of the *HPE (1999)* philosophy and much physical education practice. This epistemological and pedagogical challenge was foreshadowed by the writers of the *HPE (1999)* who wrote:

The challenge is now figuratively at the feet of the Ministry of Education, teacher educators and teachers in the field. This challenge is embedded in implementation and on-going support so that those students in schools can better reap the benefits of a more socio-cultural physical education programme (Culpan, 2000, p. 8).

When discussing the quality of the implementation of the *HPE (1999)* with colleagues, (Gillespie, Cowan, & Fyall, 2007) there was general agreement that one possibility for the varied *HPE (1999)* implementation success was that the pedagogical challenges presented were daunting for many teachers. To teach socio-critical content inherent in the *HPE (1999)* and now the *NZC (2007)* in a culturally relevant and authentic manner requires pedagogies that are situated within the socio-cultural/critical spectrum.

This poses the question of what prevents teachers from utilising socio-cultural/critical pedagogies essential for authentic curriculum implementation. One of the barriers preventing teachers from implementing socio-cultural pedagogies is the hidden lives of the students in physical education classes. Students in our classes inhabit three worlds which interact (Nuthall, 2007, p. 84). There is the “public world that the teacher sees and manages, the semi private world of ongoing peer relationships and the private world of a students own mind” (Nuthall, 2007, p. 84). Much of what

students learn in physical education will be determined by these three worlds and specifically the nature of the social relationships within their class.

The nature of social relations or students “way of being” within a class are shaped by a number of complex factors, one of which is the neoliberal context within which we live. The neoliberal societal context influences students’ ways of interacting with peers, physical education and education (Roberts, 2009). The neoliberal context can promote rampant consumerism, individualism and competitive behaviours (Roberts, 2009) which are contrary to the development of altruistic peer relations, the goals of physical education and the use of socio-cultural/critical pedagogies (Nuthall, 1999, 2007; Roberts, 2009).

Students’ “way of being” in learning contexts can mean that not all students participate in all groups and not all groups engage in sharing to the same extent (Nuthall, 1999, 2007; Roberts, 2009). In this peer world, the students negotiate social roles through power struggles and status acquisition strategies amongst their peers (Nuthall, 1999). Status within classes can be and often is related to the prior knowledge the students bring to class, perceived student ability and knowledge of the subject, as well as important peer culture customs (Nuthall, 1999). Secondary school classes are a complex and demanding social forum within which students must negotiate many tensions and understand individual nuances to develop relationships with others to enhance their learning (Nuthall, 1999). For many students “transgressing peer customs can have worse consequences than transgressing the teacher’s rules and customs” (Nuthall, 2007, p. 84). At times the peer culture can “create the belief that doing what the teacher wants is demeaning” (Nuthall, 2007, p. 37). Unfortunately most teachers do not have opportunity to have insight into their students’ attempts to negotiate peer relationships within their classes, compromising the teacher’s ability to facilitate learning.

Nuthall (2007) suggests that for group work and socio-cultural pedagogies to be successful in classrooms [and gymnasiums] there is a need for teachers to address peer culture by developing classes as learning communities. It is the intent of this

study to investigate how physical education teachers address peer relationships and develop a class culture which allows students to learn as a community, otherwise known as a learning community.

5. Research questions

The main question of this study arises from my interest in understanding how to address barriers previously discussed, which hinder the authentic implementation of physical education within the *NZC (2007)*. Nuthall (2007) states that the development of a class learning community can help ameliorate the peer culture of a class and this became the main question of the study.

- Do teachers of physical education establish classes as learning communities?
If so how?

Additional questions which subsequently emerged included:

- What pedagogies do physical education teachers use to contribute to the development of a learning community?
- What do teachers perceive as the barriers hindering the establishment of a physical education learning community?

6. The significance of the study

New Zealand is lacking in physical education practice-based research which seeks to investigate and understand practitioner issues. I have found no evidence of any research related to understanding of the physical education class as a learning community. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a peer culture which is divisive, non inclusive or actively works against the purposes and goals of the *NZC (2007)* and the teacher is a common problem in physical education. My own experience as a teacher educator confirms this. This research seeks to understand ways physical education teachers can develop the peer culture of a class so that students will support each other and ultimately take responsibility for their own and others' learning.

7. Definition of terms

It is important that readers understand the terminology used in the study to avoid confusions in interpretation.

Socio-cultural

This view of learning is known as socio-cultural learning theory and is defined as a “cognitive learning theory that emphasises the essential role that social interaction and language, embedded within a cultural context have on learning and development” (Eggen & Kauchak, 2006, p. 360). When applied to pedagogy, it refers to the models, methods and strategies which apply socio-cultural learning theory.

Socio-critical humanism

A combination of the humanist and critical paradigms can also be known as socio-critical humanism (Culpan, 2004). This is the terminology used in the discussion related to the philosophical constructs of the *HPE (1999)* and physical education within the *NZC (2007)*. In this study and in the *NZC (2007)*, critical theory is a useful analysis tool when considering the nature of power relations. Socio-critical pedagogies are the social models, methods and strategies which facilitate critical thinking and reflection within a humanist framework.

Socio-cultural/critical

The terminology of “socio-cultural/critical” refers to a combination of positionings. This positioning includes socio-cultural learning theory and sociological critical theory applied to models, methods and strategies which direct learning in ways that are socio-cultural and critical in nature.

For further definition of humanism and critical theory refer to the theoretical framework in chapter three: methodology.

Community

In this study community is defined as a way of being where teachers and children are responsive to each others ideas and feelings in a supportive environment (McGee &

Fraser, 2008; Noddings, 1995) and students consistently act in ethical and altruistic ways (Watkins, 2005). This is differentiated from the concept of community where a group of people who, in pursuit of a common interest, engage in joint activities and discussions that share information and help each other to facilitate learning (Wenger, 1999; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). In the latter definition the community may or may not be moral or altruistic. Moral and altruistic behaviour is an important foundation for a community in physical education. Further discussion about communities is found in Chapters Two and Five.

Learning Community

In this study a learning community is built on the foundations of community. In a learning community the goal is to advance the collective knowledge and support the growth of individual knowledge. In learning communities, social relations and knowledge-creation meet. “Knowledge (both individual and shared) is seen to be the product of the social processes” (Watkins, 2005, p. 43). This is achieved through the use of inquiry and socio-cultural pedagogies.

8. Limitations

There are a number of limitations in this study. In Chapter Three, the methodological constraints are woven through the fabric of chapter, discussing each limitation as it arises in context. Previously in this chapter I discussed my positioning and bias as a researcher which in itself presents limitations.

As this study used a qualitative case study design and methodology it is important to acknowledge that the major limitation of a case study is that findings cannot be generalized to the wider population (Bogden & Biklen, 2007) or to other physical education contexts.

This thesis was completed as a partial requirement of a degree of Masters in Teaching and Learning – the thesis component being the equivalent of one year of full time study. “Limited resources, limited time and limits on the human ability to grasp the

complex nature of social reality necessitates trade offs” (Patton, 2002, p. 223). Pragmatic workload and time constraints became a limitation of the study. My own limited resources in completing the research investigation resulted in trade offs which limited the scope of the study.

These limitations impacted on my ability to design and execute a methodology with increased levels of reliability and validity. In this study, one teacher’s physical education class was observed in conjunction with one student focus group interview complimented by interviews with four physical education teachers. To improve reliability and validity limitations, it would have been beneficial to have executed a design which consisted of further triangulation between each teacher’s comments with observations and focus group interviews of their classes.

Summary

In this chapter I have prepared the reader for the journey through the study. This has been achieved by initially introducing the topic and the aims of the study, the central tenet of which is to explore teachers’ and students’ understandings, discourses and activities associated with the evolution of a physical education learning community. This was complemented by an investigation of entities which hinder the development of a learning community. From this point it was important to develop understandings of my influence on the research and therefore my interest, presence, positioning and biases in the study was discussed. In outlining the context of the study, a brief overview of the *HPE (1999)* and the neoliberal context within which it was implemented is included. This is followed by an outlining of some perceived barriers surrounding the implementation of the *HPE (1999)* and the *NZC (2007)*. Nuthall (2007) suggested that developing classes as learning communities is a possible solution for mediating student peer culture, a catalyst for this investigation. This lead to statements about the research questions, the significance and the limitations of the study.

Introduction to Chapter Two

Chapter Two is the review of the literature related to learning communities and weaves this together with writings from the physical education community. This chapter explores various authors' understandings of learning communities, which is then linked to entities within physical education which contribute specifically to the development of a physical education learning community.

Chapter Two: Literature review.

Introduction

The purpose of a literature review is to provide opportunity to illuminate the intended research by creating links to others learning in the field effectively facilitating learning within a wider community. It is intended that this literature review will explore the community of literature related to learning communities and physical education. This literature review is necessarily substantial as it is the first drawing together of the literature of learning communities with physical education context. This chapter will initially explore the historical foundations of what are known today as learning communities. Contemporary academics' conceptualisations of learning communities will provide a substantial framework for understand the findings of the study. The heart of the literature review will explore the socio-cultural and instrumental pedagogies which facilitate the development of a physical education learning community. Finally it will explore the roles of the participants and the nature of the relationship between the participants and the development of the entity otherwise understood as a learning community.

1. What is a learning community?

1a. Historical learning community theorists

The belief that an effective learning community enhances student learning has its roots in the work of two of the most influential educational theorists of the early 20th Century - Dewey and Vygotsky. Dewey believed that schools and teachers had a responsibility to build on students' natural interest in their social environment by fostering interpersonal communications and group involvement (Dewey, 1938 cited in Gillies and Ashman 2003). He believed that by interacting with others, children receive feedback on their activities, they learn socially appropriate behaviours and they understand what is involved in co-operating and working together (Gillies & Ashman, 2003). In relation to this Dewey distinguished the teacher's role in a community of learners from the teacher's role in schools employing models based either on adult control or child freedom.

It is possible of course [for a teacher] to abuse the office, and to force the activity of the young into channels which express the teachers purpose rather than that of the pupils. But the way to avoid this danger is not for the adult to withdraw entirely. The way is, first, for the teacher to be intelligently aware of the capabilities, needs and past experiences of those under instruction, and secondly to allow the suggestion made to develop into a plan and project by means of the further suggestions contributed and organised into a whole by the members of the group. The plan, in other words, is a cooperative enterprise, not a dictation. The teacher's suggestion is not a mould of a cast iron result but is a starting point to be developed into a plan through contributions from the experience of all engaged in the learning process (Dewey, 1938, p. 85).

Similarly Vygotsky viewed learning as a social experience. Vygotsky contributed a strong argument that learning and development differ and not only does learning lead development, that learning creates "... the zone of proximal development" (Harland, 2003). Vygotsky's theory stated that the "zone of proximal development" is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaborations with more competent peers (Gillies & Ashman, 2003). He believed that learners can learn substantially more when problem solving collaboratively with more capable peers (Gillies & Ashman, 2003).

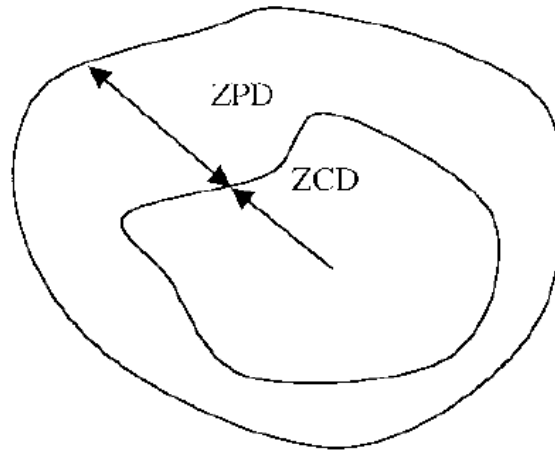


FIG. 1. The zone of current development (ZCD) represents the level that a learner can reach through independent problem solving and the ZPD as the potential distance the learner could reach with the help of a more capable peer. After successful instruction, the outer edge of the ZPD then defines the limits of the new ZCD.

(Harland, 2003, p. 263)

According to Gillies and Ashman (2003), Dewey and Vygotsky's theories had a profound influence on education, particularly in the second half of the twentieth century with the development of research in "group dynamics" (Gillies & Ashman, 2003). Over the course of the 20th Century there was substantial research which contributed to understanding the impact groups had on individuals and their learning. Numerous researchers found a distinct increase in the quantity and quality of individuals work when they were able to see and hear others working (Gillies & Ashman, 2003). Other theorists found that individuals were more productive when working in groups (Fore, Riser, & Boon, 2006; Graves, 1992; Hancock, 2004). In a landmark study Deutsch (1949b cited in Gillies & Ashman, 2003) found that when adolescent groups cooperate, they are more productive and motivated to achieve, communicate better, and have better intra-group relations than groups that compete.

These studies showed that peers could be trained to facilitate academic achievement, reduce incidents of deviant and disruptive behaviour, increase work and study skills and teach social and interactional skills (Gillies & Ashman, 2003, p. 5).

As research progressed through the 1970's and 1980's the overriding findings were of cooperation promoting higher academic achievement and productivity (i.e.

encouragement to learn) than interpersonal competition or working individually and that these results were consistent across all subject areas. It was also found that cooperative learning experiences promoted an acceptance of diversity such as gender, ethnicity, disabled and high ability students (Johnson, Johnson, & Taylor, 1993; Petersen, Johnson, & Johnson, 1991; Putnam, Markovchick, Johnson, & Johnson, 1996). This research was foundational to the development of learning communities.

1b. Learning in a learning community: The socio-cultural nature of the learning

The “group dynamic” researchers were part of the foundation for what is now contemporary learning theory related to learning communities. Contemporary learning community authors use learning theory from a constructivist perspective. The cognitive constructivists view learning as individual sense-making as new information is related to existing understandings (Rogoff, 2003; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005). Knowledge is “reorganised from the physical and social world and internalised into new or cognitive schema” (Sewell, 2006, p. 13). In this view, learning strategies are taught to students to become effective processors of new information and these theorists concentrate on the internal world of the learner.

The social constructivists attend to the social and cultural environment. These theorists agree that learning is a process of negotiating new understandings through learners’ conversations and interactions with others (Brophy, 2002). A social constructivist recognises that learning is socially rather than individually constructed.

“Learning is [...] part of our lived experience of participation in the world ... and that it is a fundamentally social phenomenon, reflecting our own deeply social nature as human beings capable of knowing” (Wenger, 1999, p. 3).

The emphasis is placed on the social nature of knowing. This view of learning is known as socio-cultural learning theory and is defined as a “cognitive learning theory that emphasises the essential role that social interaction and language, embedded within a cultural context, have on learning and development” (Eggen & Kauchak, 2006, p. 360). Cognitive and social constructivism are synthesised together within in socio-cultural learning theory.

Nuthall (1999, 2007), Rogoff (1995, 2003), Watkins (2005), Wells and Claxton (2002) and Wenger (1999) believe that the social world of classes have considerable impact on what and how students learn. Individual development and learning is viewed by these writers as “a social and cultural process that contributes to and is constituted by socio-cultural activities in which people participate” (Sewell, 2006, p. 15). The assumption that learning is socio-cultural in nature is further supported by research which suggests that students internalise the structures and processes of classroom activities through which they acquire knowledge (Nuthall, 1999, 2007). Nuthall’s questions about which activities, structures and processes are involved in the acquisition of knowledge highlight how the social world of students contributes to the internalisation of new knowledge. It draws attention to how students build networks of associations between each others knowledge and experiences. These associations and networks “create knowledge and learning that is richer and more varied than what students could create individually” (Nuthall, 1999, p. 189). There is increasing evidence that teachers who adopt beliefs and practices along the lines of learning as a socio-cultural activity get better achievement results than those who adopt belief and practices along the lines of ‘learning equals being taught’ (Watkins, 2005, p. 43), or as Carl Rogers termed it the “jug and mug” approach; teachers as jugs pouring knowledge into the students, the mugs (Rogers, 1983).

... From this perspective, teaching takes on more equitable power relationships with students in which both bring their expertise to the classroom and share responsibility for initiating and guiding learning, as well as collaborating in dialogue to co-construct shared understandings. Classroom discourse thus expands from a teacher directed communication to become a two way conversation or loops of dialogue (Sewell, 2006, p. 14).

Dialogue and decreasing the student/teacher power differential are central to the development of a learning community (Sewell, 2006).

1c. Definitions of learning community

The literature alludes to a diverse array of meanings associated with the terms “community of practice” or “community of learners” or “learning community”. Wenger (1999) bases his discussion of learning communities around a basic model of a “community of practice”. Wenger’s (1999) communities of practice are not exclusively related to institutionalised education. Communities of practice can occur anywhere where groups of people share a common concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 1999,2007). It is important to note his emphasis on “learn how to do it better” which stresses that learning is a central element of a community of practice. The learning communities or communities of practice can be engineers working on similar problems, artists exploring new forms of expression, surgeons developing new techniques or students defining their identity in school (Wenger, 1999). According to Wenger (1999, 2007) we all belong to communities of practice in all aspects of our lives.

A community of practice has three characteristics.

- **The domain.** This is the identity defined by a shared domain of interest and membership which implies a commitment to the domain and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people.
- **The community.** In pursuing their interest in their domain, the members engage in joint activities and discussions that help each other and share information. They build relationships which help them to learn from each other. The interacting, sharing, and supporting each other’s learning are crucial characteristics.
- **The practice.** Members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources, experiences, stories, tools and way of addressing recurring problems – a share practice. This takes time and sustained interaction (Wenger, 2007).

Communities of practice make knowledge an integral part of their lives, activities and interactions. They are a “living repository of knowledge of practice and are about managing knowledge” (Wenger, et al., 2002, p. 9). In the 21st Century it has become impossible for individuals to process the knowledge and information essential for staying at the “cutting edge” of their communities due to information overload.

Knowledge has become “a collective, collaborative and co-operative phenomenon” which necessitates the development of communities of practice (Wenger, et al., 2002, p. 10). Consequently responsibility for learning and learning itself becomes a social activity which necessitates formal and informal sharing. Discussion, debate and disagreement are welcome and have a crucial place within a community of practice (Wenger, et al., 2002). This type of interaction necessarily leads to a reorganisation of the power relationships within workplace and education institutions as all members are sharing and contributing to each other’s knowledge development for task completion (Wenger, et al., 2002).

On leaving school students will be required to manage knowledge and work within communities of practice in many aspects of their daily lives. It would seem rational that students could be learning the prerequisite skills to participate in a community of practice within school curricula and eventually the workplace. Wenger’s community of practice theory as situated in a school environment provides a sound basis to consider other author’s conceptualisations of community.

In education it appears that communities of practice are referred to as communities of learners or learning communities, as learning is the major focus of the community. Watkins (2005) presents a structure for a learning community that is similar to Wenger’s, however this structure specifically accounts for the unique nature of school classes. He states that it is important to acknowledge that “... teachers do not chose who they work with, or in what combinations, nor do the pupils who they work with choose their teachers or their combinations” (Watkins, 2005, p. 10), which creates a unique community of practice. His discussions around this point are relevant and he acknowledges that:

In a learning community the goal is to advance the collective knowledge and, in a way, support the growth of individual knowledge. It positions learning as a process of negotiation among the individuals in a learning community and sees individual learning as rooted in the culture within which the individual learns. In learning communities, social relations and knowledge-creation meet. Knowledge (both individual and shared) is seen to be the product of the social processes (Watkins, 2005, p. 43).

The associated metaphor for a learning community is an orchestra. Together the individuals and their instruments create something that is bigger than the sum of the parts and develop real skill in orchestrating both individual and group performance. The musicians are together for a purpose, not because blood relations or geography binds them (Watkins, 2005). The limitation of this metaphor is that the performance for an orchestra is more important than the process, where as in schools, the process is as important as the performance, if not more important. The learning is the performance for each individual.

Watkins's learning community clearly identifies key organising features:

- Hallmarks of a community: agency, belonging, cohesion, diversity
- Processes of a community: acting together, bridging, collaboration, dialogue
- Processes of a community of learners: enquiry, knowledge generation
- Processes of a learning community: reflection, meta-learning.

Figure 1 provides a summary the key elements of learning community as conceptualised by Watkins

Figure 1: A summary of the key elements of learning community (Watkins, 2005).

Hallmarks of a Community

Agency implies that students can and do make real choices and take action, intentionally and knowingly. They are empowered. A personal sense of agency and empowerment contributes to and promotes a pro social orientation, so individuals foster communal life. In a classroom the belief in both personal and collective agency needs to be active on the part of teachers and students..

Belonging is a sense of being part of a collective and psychological sense of membership, which develops a community. This has significant effects on engagement in the life and purposes of the collective. The degree of commitment students feel to a class is associated with their degree of interest in class activity, their persistence with difficult work and their academic results. A key dimension of that sense of belonging and membership is whether students feel respect, acceptance, inclusion and support. This needs to be flexible as students “way of belonging” often is variable and individual. For example rigidity can happen with the developing of a class identity and this is not desirable

Cohesion. As people develop a sense of belonging, they invest of themselves to achieve the purpose of the collective. Growth of commitment is reflected in the process of moving from “I” to “we”. This is not a form of compliance or “group think”. A sense of cohesion needs to at a level sufficient for joint action, which is enough especially because there is risk of compromising the following condition of “diversity”.

Diversity. In a community setting differences are not a threat; they are strength, whereas in the mechanical worldwide view they are. The ability to embrace difference and to view the diversity of a class positively is a crucial ingredient of community.

With this 2 linked things happen:

- ⊗ The risk of stereotyping decreases (and the hazard of division associated with it)
- ⊗ The building of complexity and richness of thinking is enhanced.

Complexity, the development of which is a guiding principle in education comes from 2 simultaneous developments:

- ⊗ Keener sense of difference and differentiated understanding, together with a larger sense of meaning and big picture
- ⊗ The 2 processes of generating diversity and building cohesion need to go hand in hand in order to achieve the balance described as “unified diversity”

In a large school community the opportunity for stereotyping is considerable, especially between teachers and students. Images of the other are constructed and acted upon. Yet the reality is more diverse.

When pupils are deemed to be unmotivated and disengaged, closer listening to these young people shows that they may at the same time have a clear view on their cultural view of their cultural identity and the practices they would honour, as well as seeking to meet wider worlds thought the context of school. This offers clues for creating school communities built on difference rather than homogeneity and to become and inclusive “community of difference”

Processes of a Community

Acting together

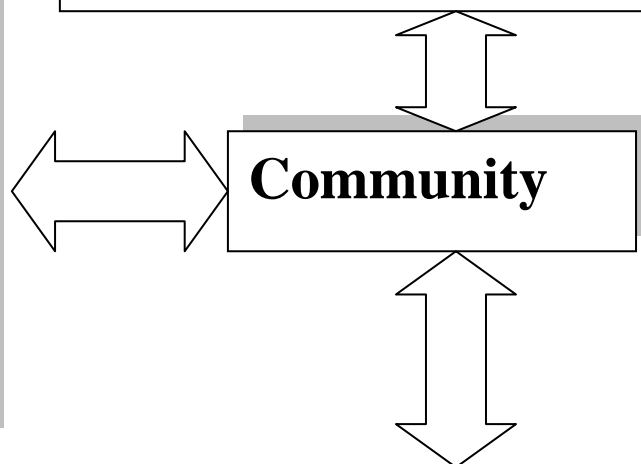
If community is about facilitating members’ actions, about it must embrace the notion that to act in a community is to act together and to act in concert (like an orchestra). Not in unison but together with some coordination which is enough to achieve a sense of acting together. Acting together achieves more together than alone and the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. This could consist of individual projects which contribute to the whole when community action emerges. There can be division of labour and agreed roles.

Bridging is when communities connect. That is one person’s ideas and interests start to connect and bridge with others ideas and interests. This is a way in which the hallmarks of cohesion and diversity are maintained in a community. Bridging means connections made to other parts of life and other communities as well. That is members understand more of the picture of each other in other parts of life than do members of machine organisations

Collaboration is a more extended process than cooperation. In communities it is likely to be student bringing something of themselves into a task. Students work together to bring something comparable to the activity and work to find common ground. These are key ingredients for collaboration. If cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals then collaboration is working together on a common task towards a common goal. Collaboration is less likely to be associated with competition of a between group.

Dialogue is a meaningful exchange of ideas or opinions It is not “discussion” which is generally held to be spoken consideration of a group however it its Latin roots carry a meaning of disputation and agitation. It is not “debate” which is a form of discourse in which two opposing team defend and attack a given proposition. The Greek root of the word dialogue are “dia” = through; “logus” = speech, word and reason, therefore dialogue means to share ideas and opinions through reasoned speech.

These hallmarks and processes are likely to be found in any community. The purposes of the community have not yet been specified.



A Community of Learners has....

Inquiry

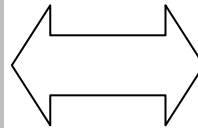
If a collective is to operate as a community and if the members of that community are engaged and interested in learning, the enquiry is likely to be emphasised as a means of learning and coming to know. This means that the pedagogy related to a community of learners is likely to include the following:

- Inquiry based learning
- Experimentation
- 1st hand experience and investigation and use of reference material

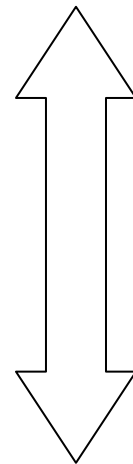
This is not just related to a preferred stance on learning but also the effect it has on the relationships in the collective or community. Inquiry learning invites communication, it captures key human processes such as interest and questioning and supports engagement between people. It is goal enhanced understanding. Making links between ideas and between knowledge, operated in contexts where connections between people are rich.

Knowledge generation:

In a community of learners the product of learning is knowledge. Being human is to appropriate knowledge and to produce knowledge. Knowledge is not subject matter exclusively and is not acquired by the transmission from books and teachers. Knowledge is contextually relevant new meaning created by the students which requires students to convey what they know as a way of demonstrating their understanding. This can be known as procedural knowledge (Biggs & Moore, 1993; Watkins, 2005). In a community of learners knowledge building is the principle activity in schooling, encompassing both the grasping of what others have already understood and sustained and a collective effort to extend the boundaries of what is known. Knowledge is an improvable object.

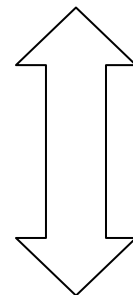


A Community of Learners



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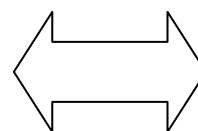
Process of a Learning Community has....

Reflection

Reflection is essential of individuals and collectives are able to learn from their experience. It is the only route through which our experience can be made the object of knowledge. A learning community learns from its own experiences of knowledge and how the knowledge was developed. For this to occur the key elements of agency, belonging, cohesion and diversity are present in the community to the full. In a learning community there will be collective reflection, which is not a substitute for individual reflection but growing from and enhancing it.

Meta learning. Meta-cognition is thinking about thinking however Watkins uses the term meta-learning which is learning about learning. This clearly has a wider set of considerations than just thinking. Learning about learning encompasses learning goals, strategies, feelings, effects and contexts for learning.

Meta learning is crucial for transfer, which is knowledge to be applied in other contexts. In a learning community there will be individual and collective meta-learning.



A Learning Community

Adrienne Alton Lee's (2003) conceptualisation of a learning community also builds on the theme of members engaged collaboratively in learning. Her synthesis of research emphasises the assumption that to optimise learning conditions for diverse learners, a central focus on learning is required and the interdependence of the social and the academic is acknowledged to optimise learning conditions (Alton-Lee, 2003). According to Alton Lee, the term learning community has the following characteristics.

- A classroom where the peer culture has been developed by the teacher to support the learning of each member of the community.
- A key change strategy is identified that can help develop such a classroom culture
- Pedagogical practices and social norms which are inclusive of diverse learners.
- Teaching includes training in collaborative group work with individual accountability mechanisms.
- Students demonstrate effective co-operative and social skills that enable group processes to facilitate learning for all participants.
- Pedagogical practice is appropriately responsive to the interdependence of socio-cultural and cognitive dimensions

(Alton-Lee, 2003, p. 26).

Teachers who develop learning communities develop professional relationships with students which allow for learning conversations but also construct a pedagogical caring which shapes peer culture in classes (Alton-Lee, 2003).

Similar to Alton Lee's (2003), Ann Brown's (1997) conceptualisation consists of the following characteristics.

- Active purposeful learning involving meta-cognition.
- A learning setting that pays attention to multiple zones of proximal development.

- Learners' legitimisation of differences. This diversity adds to a sense of community which will be enriched and an increase in the diversity of knowledge and skills for all members.
- A community of discourse: communities develop norms for goals, values and ways of discussing ideas, including what counts as evidence, how people exchange ideas or argue.
- A community practice: learners depend on each other in order to accomplish their tasks.

(Brown 1997 cited
in McGrath, 2003)

Selby and Pike (2000) are in concurrence with aspects of these views stating that basic learning is at its most effective within a “learning environment of vibrancy and warmth” and that “active and participatory approaches are particularly valuable in assuring learning acquisition and allowing learners to reach their fullest potential” (Selby & Pike, 2000, p. 2). Research about influences on student learning concludes that learning is supported when structures for caring, opportunities for collaborative learning and appreciation for diversity are established in classrooms (Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2007 cited in Alton Lee 2003). Many authors concur with the concept that a sense of belonging, concern and care for all members is a key concept in a learning community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Brown, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 1997; McGee & Fraser, 2008; Noddings, 1995; Rogoff, Turkanis, & Bartlett, 2001; Selby & Pike, 2000; Sewell, 2006). Caring is a way of being in relation with another, where teachers and children are responsive to each others ideas and feelings in a supportive environment (McGee & Fraser, 2008; Noddings, 1995). An ethic of caring was found by Osterman (2000) to be an important construct for a sense of community and when students' need for belonging was met, motivation, achievement and efficacy beliefs were enhanced (Osterman, 2000).

Solomon, et.al. (1996), states that community is a social organisation whose members know, care about and support one another, have common goals and a sense of shared purpose to which they actively contribute and feel personally committed (D.

Solomon, Watson, Battistich, Schaps, & Delucchi, 1996). Bryk and Driscoll (1988) and McMillian and Charvis' (1986) definitions of community share similar themes to Alton-Lee (2003), Brown (1997), Darling Hammond (1997), Noddings (1995), and Selby and Pike (2000) who depict a class community as an opportunity to exert meaningful influence on the class environment, integration and fulfilment of needs (i.e. satisfaction gained through membership) a shared emotional connection, a caring environment and interpersonal concern or support as essential to community (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; McMillian & Charvis, 1986; D. Solomon, et al., 1996).

In summary, authors who subscribe to the learning as a socio-cultural constructivist activity view learning communities as learners working together to support each others learning, through the employment of active participatory teaching and learning methods to complement a warm, personal and vibrant environment. They believe that it is a principle that teachers construct a community where students have a sense of belonging, where they begin to think of the group as "we" as opposed to "I", where diversity is viewed as a strength and through this students develop a sense of agency (Watkins, 2005). Alton-Lee (2003), Rogoff (2003) and Watkins (2005) state that this foundation allows the students the opportunity to act together collectively, co-operatively and collaboratively to support each other's learning. This could be described as a learning community, where the students are learning within a community (McGee & Fraser, 2008).

1d. Community of learners versus a learning community

Watkins (2005) makes a distinction between a community of learners and a learning community. A learning community is viewed as a class where participants are actively aware of, understand and reflect on knowledge generation and meta-learning through the process of individual and group reflection, where curriculum is a co-constructed (Alton-Lee, 2003; McGee & Fraser, 2008; Rogoff, et al., 2001; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005). The learning process is a central learning outcome alongside the co-construction of learning where "learning and teaching need to be seen as essentially an enterprise of inquiry that is dialogically co-constructed by the teacher and student together" (Sewell, 2006, p. 5). Watkins (2005) differentiates a community of learners from a learning community, as a community of learners does

not engage with understanding knowledge generation and learning processes (Watkins, 2005).

Pryor's (2004) interpretation of community has some synergies and distinct differences with previous authors' definitions, highlighting students participating in democratic processes within the class. Teachers and students in democratic class communities develop culture, rituals and processes which are based on the notion of social justice and consultative learning processes. Students will have the opportunity to participate in decision making, share responsibility for learning and explore issues of social justice. This will involve a redistribution of power and responsibility between the teacher and students. This aligns with the utilisation of such strategies as co-constructed or negotiated curriculum, the use of class meetings and school councils (Pryor, 2004). Watkins's conceptualisation of a learning community (see Fig 1) is similar to Pryor's in that social justice and democracy are inherent within the structure however this is not a dominant focus (Watkins, 2005).

2. Teachers use class sessions to value diversity, to establish and build community.

As discussed previously a sense of belonging and a caring supportive environment is important for all students' engagement and motivation. It is central to the development of a democratic learning community that the needs of all students be met and therefore consideration must be given to the diverse nature of physical education classes. The concept of diversity and inclusion is significant in the conceptualisation of a learning community (Watkins, 2005) and according to Alton Lee "rejects the notion of a 'normal' group and 'other' or minority groups of children and constitutes diversity and difference as central to the classroom endeavour and central to the focus of quality teaching in Aotearoa, New Zealand" (Alton-Lee, 2003, p. 28). Diversity is inclusive and needs to be responsive to many individual characteristics including ethnicity, socio-economic background, home language, gender, special needs, disability, and giftedness. In Alton Lee's Best Evidence Synthesis (2003) evidence is discussed which supports the notion that teaching that is responsive to student diversity can have very positive impacts on low and high achievers at the same time.

As noted from Fig 1 in this chapter, Watkins (2005) also supports the notion of constructing diversity as a strength, which contributes to the richness of student learning the community.

3. The teacher represents ‘us’ as everyone in our learning community

To develop an inclusive and socially just learning community it becomes apparent that the teacher strives to be representative of all members of the class. Alton Lee (2003) stated that:

The teacher has a key role in representing class community to the students, and with the students, in ways that do not exclude by ethnicity, gender, dis/ability, social class background or sexuality (Alton-Lee, 2003, p. 30).

It is important that teachers find ways to ensure that the pronoun “we” includes all members of the class and not just students who are like the teacher. Alton-Lee, Nuthall and Patrick (1998) reported on a series of studies in New Zealand classrooms, which identified that inadvertently teachers can use the pronoun “we” to mean;

...Europeans, white men' excluded from the 'we' of the classroom community
(Alton-Lee, Nuthall, & Patrick, 1999, p. 30)

It was reported that when ‘we’ was used in this way it is possible that some students can be excluded from the class community.

...a Māori student who immediately became the object of racist abuse from his peers who noticed and exploited the exclusion (Alton-Lee, et al., 1999, p. 30).

Alton Lee is implying that New Zealand physical education teachers need to represent a ‘we’ that is inclusive of all ethnicities in our classes to ensure that the community is inclusive.

4. Socio-moral development as a foundation to community

The foundational components of a community are closely and positively linked to higher levels of moral reasoning based on participants’ internalised values and norms

(Watkins, 2005). Students in classes with a strong sense of community are more likely to act ethically and altruistically and more likely to develop social and emotional competencies (Watkins, 2005). Altruistic communities are founded on the ability of its participants to exhibit morals and behaviours that allow for cooperative enterprise (D. Solomon, et al., 1996; Watkins, 2005). It is noticeable that there is a significant silence surrounding the morals in the learning community literature. There appears to be little exploration of what morals are required to facilitate the development of community and how they could be developed. Interestingly socio-moral education has long been an important purpose for physical educators, many of whom are strong advocates of using movement contexts in an instrumental manner to teach about domains outside of the physical (Arnold, 1979, 1999, 2001; Laker, 2000). This literature helps to explore the socio-moral underpinnings of communities. Laker (2000), states that traditionally socio-moral education has an illustrious history in the purposes of physical education, and it occupies an important space in physical education curricular. Throughout history there has been considerable debate about the appropriateness of physical education concerning itself with outcomes outside the psychomotor domain, and “many prominent physical educators have championed the cause for careful attention to concomitant outcomes” to this end (Figley, 1984, p. 94).

Physical education is often thought of as an appropriate context for the teaching and learning of socio-moral content because:

- it provides authentic contexts and examples of ethical or moral reasoning and decision making to be explored by the students. Sport within a physical education context can be a moral practice with its basis in fairness and ethical principles. Sport without an appreciation for fairness and social justice is not sport, therefore making sport within physical education suitable for exploring and developing moral and ethical decision making (Arnold, 1979; Miller, Bredemeier, & Shields, 1997);
- in movement contexts and sport, students have the opportunity to explore socio-moral tensions. For example:
 - Individual and group risk taking vs. decisions about safety
 - Individual vs. group responsibility
 - Individual freedom vs. freedom of a group or community;

- physical education is less commercialised and formalised than competitive sport and gives teachers more freedom to de-emphasise competition and emphasise other outcomes.
- movement contexts in physical education give students the opportunity to be socially interactive and invite different ways of relating to peers and teachers.
- expert teachers can implement instrumental approaches to learning closely related to socio-moral outcomes (Laker, 2000; Miller, et al., 1997).

One goal of learning within the affective domain is the development of moral reasoning which is also known as character development (G. Solomon, 1997). Moral reasoning or character development has historically had many names such as virtues, character, moral, socio-moral, sportsmanship, life and citizenship education, and education for personal and social responsibility, and Olympism (Arnold, 1996, 1999; Gould & Carson, 2008; Martinek & Hellison, 1998; Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006). All of these names have similar purposes and goals in that they refer to the development of the affective domain which includes content relating to morals, attitudes, values and intra and interpersonal skills and knowledge necessary to contribute positively to a socially just and democratic society. For the purposes of this study this aspect of the affective domain is referred to as socio-moral education.

According to G. Solomon (1979b), socio-moral education refers to the striving for an optimal balance between the self and others by attending to one's own needs and the needs of others simultaneously. Scharf has a broader humanistic definition stating that socio-moral education is concerned with a "regard for the dignity and worth of all human beings and a concern for justice" (Scharf, 1978, p. 94 cited in Figley 1985). A common socio-moral goal is education for "personal and social responsibility; individuals taking responsibility for their actions and contributing to the creation of healthy and sustainable communities" (Laker, 2000, p. 74).

It is pertinent to consider the literature about learning socio-moral competencies within a physical education environment. Developing the socio-moral abilities of students is foundational to the development of community, as to function it is

desirable for its members to be altruistic in their actions. This reasoning would give the impression that it is advisable for teachers to allocate time and explicit planning to the teaching of socio-moral competencies.

5. Developing community through the socio-moral.

As previously mentioned learning communities are by definition altruistic in nature. This leads us to the question of “what” is required to develop an ethical and democratic community. Miller, Bredemeier and Shields (1997) implemented a moral education intervention within physical education classes with at-risk students, with the dual purpose of developing participants’ moral reasoning maturity to contribute to the development of the class as a community. The programme goals promoted empathy, moral reasoning maturity, task motivation and the development of personal and social responsibility. This was achieved through the use of co-operative learning, explicitly planning to build a moral community, creating a mastery motivational climate and transferring of power from the teacher to students, concomitant with students’ acceptance of increasing personal and social responsibility. The researchers assumed that students would be unable to act with consistent moral maturity if they were unable to reason coherently about moral choices, therefore needing opportunities to learn about moral reasoning (Miller, et al., 1997). The development of moral reasoning and moral actions (such as personal and social responsibility) was promoted through the use of cooperative learning activities (as opposed to competitive), a mastery climate which emphasised skill development (as opposed to performance climates which emphasise competitive success) and the transferring of decision making power from the teachers to the students, which allowed students to take responsibility for their own and others learning (Miller, et al., 1997). It is important to note that this intervention ensured that the physical education class environment was structured cooperatively as the authors believed that this would provide the opportunity to promote student empathy more effectively than environments which are structured competitively (Barnett, Mathews, & Howard, 1979; Johnstone, 1987; Miller, et al., 1997). This is particularly true of situations characterised by both means and goal interdependency, where the participants need to coordinate their efforts in order to achieve a mutual “super-ordinate” goal, as the socio-moral goals of empathy development and personal and social responsibility are then more likely to

be stimulated. This intervention did result in enhanced empathy, moral reasoning maturity, individual motivation and personal and social responsibility. There have been a number of similar research studies in physical education whose authors claim that when learning in physical education (and sport) is viewed as an ethical and moral activity, in which sport and physical activity are constructed as essentially cooperative, students can have the opportunity to develop socio-moral learning outcomes and apply them to relevant contexts (Balderson & Sharpe, 2005; Cecchini, Montero, Alonso, Izquierdo, & Contreras, 2007; Gould & Carson, 2008; Hochstetler, 2006; G. Solomon, 2007).

When explicitly planning learning outcomes within the socio-moral, the teacher is attempting to influence student schema or way of being, through developing ethical and moral reasoning and behaviour. Stith and Roth (2008) define schemas as the general procedures people follow in social life which are dialectically related with the social systems and structure of a class. Schemas are not stagnantly defined, rather they are ever changing as social life develops and in turn constructs social life. For example there are “particular schemas for how one participates in an interview that determines it as such” (Stith & Roth, 2008, p. x), and there are schema which influence how students chose to participate in physical education. The physical education schema of students will impact significantly on a teacher’s ability to mould a class into a community and then further into a learning community. It is reasonable to assume that teachers should and can influence student schema through teaching about the socio-moral as it impacts directly on student attitudes and behaviours which in turn impact on student learning within the physical education class community. Socio-moral teaching and learning are entities which have the potential to influence student’s physical education schema.

6. The tasks of a learning community: creating learning activities for learning communities.

Students creating knowledge together is a defining feature of a learning community inherent in its vision and purpose. Initially a physical education community is established through participants’ ability to act morally and altruistically for the greater

good of the community which is an essential foundation for the creation of a learning community (Watkins, 2005).

The tasks devised by teachers and engaged with by the students to develop a learning community will create the defining nature of the physical education class. As part of the hidden curriculum (Culpan & Bruce, 2007; Fernandez-Balboa, 1993), learning tasks are interpreted by students as they receive clear messages about what is valued and not valued by the teacher (A. Davies & Hill, 2009). A similar process applies to the development of a learning community where students develop meta-learning skills to generate knowledge together. Task design must be authentic with the desired outcomes and send clear messages to students about what is valued (A. Davies & Hill, 2009). At this point it is useful to consider previously discussed beliefs about learning and how this impacts on the construction of learning tasks and influences teachers' construction of learning activities. Watkins (2005), Rogoff (2003) and Sewell (2006) state that if a teacher believes that learning equals "being taught", then the learning tasks generated will be more individual in nature and teacher centred, with a predominant mode of direct teaching, working through worksheets, text books, utilising presentations and lectures (Rogoff, 2003; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005). These same authors also state that teachers who believe that learning is about individual sense-making and constructing and generating knowledge with others, (socio-cultural learning theory) tend to act as a facilitators and construct learning tasks which contribute to the creation of an environment which encourages students to seek knowledge and find personal meaning in that knowledge (Rogoff, 2003; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005). While a "learning equals begin taught" belief about learning does not preclude the use of socio-cultural pedagogies and visa versa, teachers who subscribe to this view will predominantly use to pedagogies which align with their beliefs (Watkins, 2005) and must be aware that the selection of pedagogies will send clear messages to students about what teachers value in terms of learning.

6a. Instrumental approaches to learning tasks in physical education

Arnold (1979) drew on humanism to conceptualise an approach to physical education where movement is used as a vehicle for learning about outcomes other than the

psychomotor. In this stance movement includes all aspects of sport, dance, leisure, recreation and play. Arnold (1979) alludes to this approach when he asserted that physical education could be separated into 3 dimensions.

- Education about movement
- Education through movement
- Education in movement

Arnold (1979) argues that education through movement, an instrument approach, uses movement as a context or instrument to explicitly explore and teach about outcomes other than the psychomotor, such as attitudes and values appreciated by society. His ideas were supported by other authors who believe that the concepts of empathy, moral reasoning, tolerance, respect, leadership, interpersonal skills, accepting diversity, inclusion, and meta-learning skills amongst others, are often outcomes physical education teachers are able to teach about through movement (Arnold, 1979; Balderson & Sharpe, 2005; Cecchini, et al., 2007; Gould & Carson, 2008; Hochstetler, 2006; Laker, 2000; Miller, et al., 1997; G. Solomon, 2007). Olympism is another instrumental approach which provides a framework for students to learn about socio-moral outcomes (Arnold, 1996; Bronikowski, 2006; New Zealand Olympic Committee, 2000; Jeu & Boulongne, 1994; Muller, 2000). “Olympism uses sport to promote the balanced development of people as an essential step in building a peaceful society that places high value on human dignity” (New Zealand Olympic Committee, 2000, p. 2).

Teaching about the socio-moral and meta-cognitive in physical education can occur instrumentally. Miller et al.(1997) states that this can occur when students are working cooperatively to create, problem solve, discuss real life issues, and through the use of strategies designed to promote group cohesion and meta learning, which is rooted in collective identity. Hellison (1985), Martinek (2006) and Walsh (2007) concur by stating that teacher led discussions reflecting on the activity can help students identify and reflect on key socio-moral issues, but it is only through peer interaction that students can come to claim a group social, moral and learning identity otherwise known as a learning community.

6b. Tasks for learning: social learning, learning about the social and learning about meta-learning

The learning tasks in physical education can have multiple purposes, as the models, methods and strategies that develop students; meta-learning, socio-cultural and socio-moral learning's are generic and can be used in diverse ways. Research in New Zealand is increasingly showing that "task design plays a central role in structuring and developing an effective learning community" (Alton-Lee, 2003, p. 29). The social and the cognitive are not distinct domains in practice, but are integrated and embedded in task and activity design and classroom organisation. Nuthall (1999) emphasized the need for teachers to design tasks to increase levels of trust, acceptance, sharing and mutual support between students. Teachers use instructional organisation and task design to develop learning communities. Bossert's (1979) study of social relationships in classrooms found that the structure of the learning task significantly influenced how the student relationships were shaped within the community. He stated that task structures rather than personalities shape peer interactions and that,

...student friendship patterns and peer status were directly shaped by the teacher's instructional design, task format, task management, the rationale for group membership, and grouping practices. He revealed multi-task environments to enable diverse students to variously perform well because the multiple tasks engaged different student strengths at different times. In these environments friendship patterns tended to be more fluid and cooperative. When single task large group formats prevailed, fixed academic hierarchies formed influencing friendship patterns and academic status shaped by the teacher's public evaluations. Students became more competitive and less inclined to help, or associate with, many other class members. (Bossert, 1979 cited in Alton Lee 2003, p. 29).

This has obvious significance for teachers when considering the design of tasks which are coherent with the goals of developing a learning community. Teachers can generate and provide a wide variety of curriculum-relevant tasks that disrupt hierarchies developing between students which enable the diverse valuing of student

knowledge's and skills (Nuthall, 1999, 2007). Fortunately, there is a multiplicity of models, methods and strategies available to foster these outcomes. (Eggen & Kauchak, 2006; Hellison, 1985; Joyce, Weil, & Calhoun, 2000; Lieber, 2002; Luckner & Nadler, 1997; Mosston & Ashworth, 1986).

Socially structuring the community to achieve the above outcomes can occur through using teaching and learning models and strategies derived from the “social”, group interaction and participatory families of learning (Eggen & Kauchak, 2006; Joyce, et al., 2000). These families of models all have similar underpinning assumptions as follows.

- Learning is a co-operative activity (Alton-Lee, 2003; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005; Wenger, 1999).
- Sharing knowledge facilitates the process of knowledge construction and is sometimes described as occurring from the outside in (Brenner, 2001 cited in Eggen and Kauchak 2006).
- Learners think collaboratively, building each other's understandings and negotiating meaning when ideas differ (Meter & Stevens, 2000).
- After understanding is developed, it is then internalised by individuals (Eggen & Kauchak, 2006).
- The process of appropriating understanding is a direct result of student interaction. Students borrow and build from each other's ideas and thinking (Leont'ev, 1981).
- Social interaction also facilitates learning by encouraging students to articulate their thinking, the process of trying out ideas into words. This is cognitively demanding and a powerful tool for learning.
- Students learn about “what” to think as well as “how” to think (Eggen & Kauchak, 2006p86).

The teaching and learning methods directly associated with these assumptions about learning, are structured in such a manner as to create a “social” learning environment

and also learn about the social (Alton-Lee, 2003; McGee & Fraser, 2008; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005). Interdependence and student agency are important structures within models and methods for and about the social, and supporters of social/group interaction models believe that they must foster interdependence between the members of the group, as interdependence fosters respect for others and their contributions and is required for handling individual contributions to a communal effort and is a feature of building collective knowledge social (Alton-Lee, 2003; McGee & Fraser, 2008; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005).

6c. Generic Tasks for Learning

Watkins (2005) and Alton Lee (2003) emphasise that the models and strategies which meet the above criteria for both interdependence and student agency can concurrently facilitate the development of a learning community. The following tasks and strategies can be considered effective tools to meet these learning goals.

- Communication tasks: students explaining to themselves and then to others their understandings. This type of task is commonly called peer dialogue. This develops cumulatively by moving from pairs to small groups and ultimately to the class. An example of this is the “think, pair, share” strategy (Watkins, 2005).
- Collaborative tasks where a single product is generated by more than one person. For example: The discovery styles in Mosston’s and Ashworth’s Spectrum of Styles (Mosston & Ashworth, 1986).
- Teacher questioning and conversations with students about collaboration and thinking to enhance reflection and learning.
- Community tasks which involve the whole class as a community, which is composed of a number of contributions (commonly called co-operative learning), which is then communicated to another audience or a performance. This includes cycles of research – share – perform. This can happen in a number of contexts including scientific inquiry (Alton-Lee, 2003; Eggen & Kauchak, 2006; Gillies & Ashman, 2003; Johnson, Johnson, Stanne, &

Garibaldi, 1990; Joyce, et al., 2000; McGee & Fraser, 2008; Sewell, 2006; Slavin & Cooper, 1999; Watkins, 2005).

6ci. Tasks for meta-learning in a learning community

Claxton (2008) and Watkins (2005) believe that to make meta-learning an object of understanding for students, teachers can facilitate opportunities for students to notice and process the experience of their learning. They state that this can be developed through opportunities for students to converse, reflect and experiment with their own learning (Claxton, 2008; Watkins, 2005; Wells & Claxton, 2002). Stopping the flow of the class to allow students to notice and cumulatively build up a language for noticing more is another strategy. Claxton (2008), Wells and Claxton (2002) and Watkins (2005) state that teacher questioning, conversations and reflections with individuals and with the students as a collective are an effective tool for guiding understanding about all content including learning about learning. Questions such as:

- What do we mean by learning?
- When is it best for you?
- Where is it best?
- What helps?
- What steps or actions do you take to learn?
- How does it feel?
- What surprises have you found?
- Tell us about a good learning experience for you, why was it good?
- How can you help yourself to become engaged?

(Claxton, 2008; Watkins, 2005; Wells & Claxton, 2002)

Activities such as this can be easily woven through all models, methods and strategies employed in a community and are essential for the development of students' meta-learning skills and understanding.

6c.ii. Specific models in physical education

There are a range of models specific to physical education which allows teachers to provide social learning opportunities about the social and meta-learning social learning tasks.

Experiential learning

Experiential learning is an instrumental approach which has its basis in student experience. It is a process through which individuals acquire skills, enhance values and construct knowledge through participating in activities with others through direct experience (Beard & Wilson, 2002; Luckner & Nadler, 1997; Watkins, 2005). This learning is also referred to as episodic memory or learning which is characterised by personal experience and iconic images (Biggs & Moore, 1993). Luckner and Nadler (1997) believe that learning at some level will occur when students are interested in what is happening to them. The effectiveness of the learning is derived from the maxim that nothing is more relevant to us than ourselves.

Experiential Learning advocates believe that the whole person needs to be involved in the learning. This means that the learner and learning experience should be incorporating the multifaceted domains or dimensions into the learning such as body awareness, feelings and attitudes, interpersonal relations, social and political processes, psychic and spiritual awareness (Heron, 1989). Experiential learning also draws on the dimensions of learning as described by Biggs and Moore (2003) which include the affective, enactive, sensory, spatial, temporal, semantic, and logical.

Beard and Wilson (2002) believe that experience is the most powerful learning tool available to educators and to understand the process we must consider the meaning of experience and gain some insight into its power to facilitate learning. Beard and Wilson's ideas about learning are closely linked to Dewey's (1938) foundational thoughts, who stated that learning,

...is the intentional endeavour to discover specific connections between something which we do and the consequences which result, so that the two become continuous. (Dewey, 1938, p. 144).

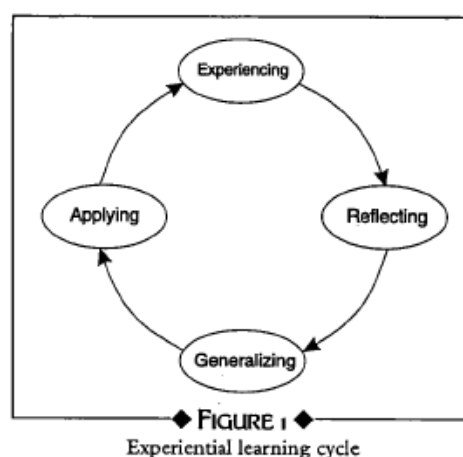
Therefore experience cannot be divorced from learning and thinking and is essential to the process. Beard and Wilson (2002) concur with Dewey (1938) and further define experiential learning as:

The insight gained through the conscious or unconscious internalisation of our own or observed interactions which build on our past experiences and knowledge (Beard & Wilson, 2002, p. 15).

However experience on its own does not necessarily constitute learning as reflection on the experience is often ignored. Beard and Wilson (2002) and Luckner and Nadler (1997) assume that an action–reflection cycle is desirable to facilitate explicit learning and it is the reflection that turns experience into experiential learning. Experiencing something is a linking process between action and thought (Beard & Wilson, 2002) and can therefore result in thinking and learning. It is therefore important to ensure that students in physical education have the opportunity to reflect on their experiences to enhance opportunities for learning.

Luckner and Nadler’s (1997) diagram displays the basic experiential cycle with four stages which is most commonly used in physical education teaching (see fig 2 below). This cycle can apply to all learning contexts and content including the socio-moral and meta-learning outcomes. At the conclusion of the “applying” stage of the cycle students can move onto another experience to develop a further learning (a double loop) or apply the knowledge to complete the learning (single loop).

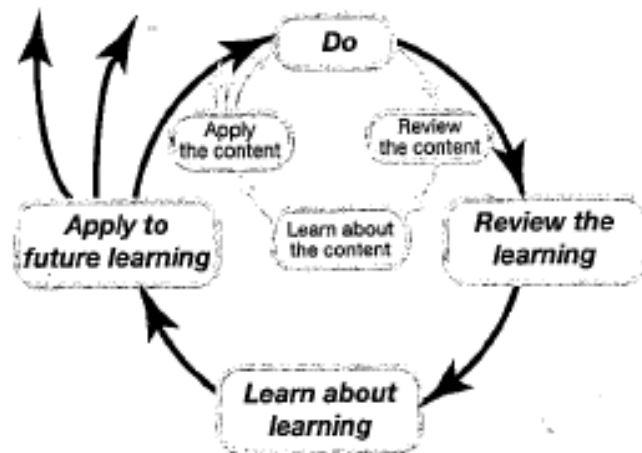
Fig 2



(Luckner & Nadler, 1997, p. 6)

Watkins presents a very useful cycle which explicitly refers to a “doing-learning” cycle (see Fig 3). This diagram represents two cycles within cycles occurring at the same time. One cycle is about meta-learning and the other learning about content. The explicit representation of meta-learning suggests that this experiential learning cycle is a worthy applicant when considering the goals of a learning community, however it does not explicitly subscribe to learning through experience as the word “do” is a broad term which is a disadvantage for a physical education context.

Fig 3

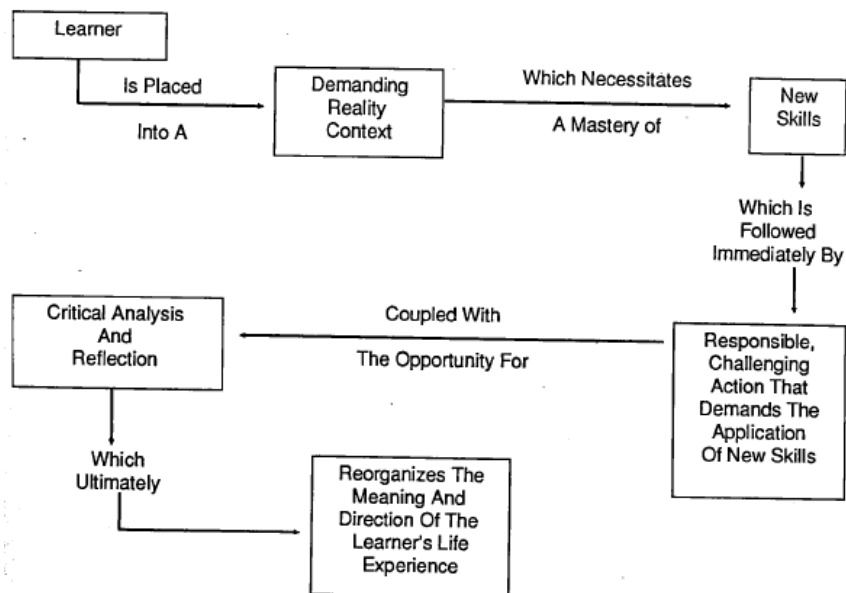


(Watkins, 2005, p. 101)

Herbert’s (1995) model (see Fig 4) is more detailed and makes explicit reference to “reality contexts” in the experience component of the cycle. This model has significant detail related to the learning processes underpinning the development of

both procedural and episodic memory. Of the three models presented, this model has a very clear focus on learning through holistic, challenging and demanding activities which create cognitive dissonance or the stimulus and context for learning, most suitable for a physical education context.

Fig 4



(Herbert, 1995, p. 207)

Herbert (1995) explained his views of authentic experiential learning, stating that often experiential learning is viewed as an “all or nothing” approach. He continued with the statement “experiential learning in its most authentic form requires students taking responsibility for their own learning by co-constructing learning goals, learning activities and subsequent discoveries through experience. If the learning activities do not intend to achieve this outcome then it’s not experiential learning, its something else. It is the quality of the experience and the active student involvement in the experience which is important” (Herbert, 1995p202).

All of these experiential learning models are based on a cycle which includes “experience or do” activities which allow the students to reflect, problem solve and

learn from the activity. The experience and do aspects of each authors cycle is generic yet at the same time fits well with instrumental approaches to learning in physical education.

Mosston's spectrum of teaching styles

Mosston (1986) developed a spectrum of teaching styles based around decision making, student empowerment and meta-learning. His styles are concerned with the decisions made by teachers and students pre-impact (before the lesson) impact (during) and post impact (after the lessons). He developed ten styles in which he empowers the students to take responsibility for their own and others' learning by gradually moving the decision making responsibility from the teacher to the student. This describes a continuum, where at one extreme is the direct, teacher-led approach and at the other lies a much more open-ended and student-centred style where the teacher acts in a facilitatory role (Mosston & Ashworth, 1986)

Style A Command - teacher makes all decisions

Style B Practice - Students carry out teacher-prescribed tasks

Style C Reciprocal - Students work in pairs: one performs, the other provides feedback

Style D Self-check - Students assess their own performance against criteria

Style E Inclusion - Teacher planned. Student monitors own work

Style F Guided Discovery - Students solve teacher set movement problems with assistance

Style G Divergent - Students solve problems without assistance from the teacher

Style H Individual - Teacher determines content. Student plans the programme

Style I Learner Initiated - Student plans own programme. Teacher is advisor

Style J Self Teaching - Student takes full responsibility for the learning process

(Doherty, 2003; Mosston & Ashworth, 1986)

Within these styles there is a mix of meta-cognitive and socio-cultural learning outcomes. As students move along this continuum, they will have opportunity to learn many socio-moral and meta-learning skills pre-requisite to participation in a learning community.

Hellison's teaching personal and social responsibility (TPSR) model

Another instrumental approach is the TPSR Model, devised by Hellison (1985) initially to help underserved or at-risk youth. This model is increasingly being used in regular physical education school settings (Hellison, 1985; Walsh, 2007). Hellison's model consists of learning strategies and tasks which give students the opportunity to develop ethically and morally by providing increasing amounts of responsibility. This is similar to Mosston's and Ashworth's styles (1986) as decision making and responsibility is moved to the students. Hellison and Templin (1991) describe the model as;

...teaching self and social responsibility by empowering students to take on more responsibility for their own bodies and lives in the face of a variety of barriers and limitations, and by teaching students that they have a social responsibility to be sensitive to the rights, feelings and needs of others.

(Hellison & Templin, 1991, p. 50)

Hellison's TPSR Model provides a conceptual framework for teachers to integrate socio-moral outcomes within the learning tasks in movement contexts. Teachers plan for students to learn specific values experientially by developing learning activities where students are required to make decisions, take responsibility for self and others, and participate in reflection activities for learning. Hellison's TPSR Model has five goals that provide guidelines to the students and teachers.

- Respect for the rights and feelings of others: self control, the right to peaceful conflict, the right to be included.
- Participation and effort: exploring effort, trying new things, a personal definition of success.
- Self direction: on task independent, personal plan, balancing current and future needs

- Sensitivity and responsiveness to the wellbeing of others: interpersonal skills, compassion without reward, contributing to group and community.
- Outside the gym: transfer of responsibility to the rest of the school, the playground and at home (Hellison, 1985, 2000; Hellison & Walsh, 2002).

These goals synthesise into levels which allow the goals to be learning resources accessible to the students.

- Level 1: Irresponsibility
- Level 2: Respect
- Level 3: Participation
- Level 4: Self direction
- Level 5: Caring

Carefully designed teaching and learning activities and explicit teacher behaviours allow the students the opportunity to experience activities which promote socio-moral values and the appropriate associated behaviours and consequences at each level of the model.

All of the previous models could be thought of as experiential in nature as they have in common a ‘do – reflect – learn – apply’ cycle which can implemented in movement contexts. They all have the potential to allow student the opportunity to learn about socio-moral and meta-learning outcomes through movement contexts central to the development of a learning community.

7. The role of the teacher: teachers as facilitators of learning

All of the above physical education models provide opportunities for students to make decisions, reflect and learn through experience by promoting student agency in social learning opportunities within a learning community. The role of the teacher is pivotal to the success of these models. Bentley (1994) describes the teacher orientation

required for the development of a learning community as one of facilitation. Facilitation can be described as empowering people to take control and responsibility for their own efforts (Bentley, 1994; Rogers, 1983). Berry (1993) defined facilitation as a willingness to take responsibility for the whole, seeking to enable (as opposed to direct) each individual to contribute as appropriate to the learning community (Berry, 1993). Facilitators are teachers who are “facilitative, involved and nurture (rather than neglect and frustrate) students’ psychological needs, personal interests, and integrated values” (Reeve, 2006, p. 228). Facilitative processes are learner centered and contrast with directive “jug and mug” styles of more traditional methods (Rogers, 1983).

All elements discussed in this literature review to this point contribute to the development of a learning community, however the glue that holds it all together is the relationship between the students and the teacher and the facilitative process. “Student-teacher relationships are widely recognised as being important to student motivation, intellectual development and general achievement as well as to the overall supportive, safe class environment which encourages learning.” (Aultman, Williams-Johnson, & Schutz, 2009, p. 636). Aultman et al. (2009) suggests that the teacher’s ability to develop positive interpersonal relationships with students is required for effective teaching, as this allows for the meaningful conversations which enhance the learning community alongside individual learning (Aultman, et al., 2009). Noddings (1995, 2001) and Lee and Rivizza (2008) also state that taking a personal interest in students’ lives in a variety of contexts allows for the building of a personal yet professional relationship through which teachers can find ways to bring students into the important learning conversations and demonstrate an ethic of care for the students. Rogers (1983) has much to add to the discussion on student teacher relationships. He believes that the teacher needs to have a transparent realness about them which could be described as sincerity, genuineness and an ethic of care (Rogers, 1983). The teachers who sincerely value, trust and have respect for the learners, demonstrate this through well developed intra and interpersonal skills which contribute to positive student teacher relations and an enhanced learning climate (Aultman, et al., 2009; Lee & Ravizza, 2008; Rogers, 1983) within which the student is “trusted to develop (Rogers, 1983, p. 133).

7a. The ethic of care: Building student teacher relationships

Lee and Rivizza (2008) state that a caring relationship with students can be manifested in a number of ways. The institutional design or organisation of a school can convey care and trust. Noddings (1995, 2001) and Lee and Rivizza (2008) believe that the design of curriculum can demonstrate pedagogical caring, through the choice of content and design of learning activities. Larson (2006) contributes to the conversation stating that teachers can show their caring through characteristic forms of attention such as showing students how to do a skill, the honouring of requests, giving and receiving compliments, confronting students, showing concern for student health and wellbeing, showing interest in students' lives and providing carefully for the steady growth of the individual. Personal manifestations of care are just as important in children's lives as any particular curriculum or pattern of pedagogy, however curriculum can also be designed and selected with caring in mind. (Noddings, 1995, 2001).

An ethic of care can contribute to a reciprocal relationship with the students allowing for the development of "synergistic power" relationships which can ultimately lead to the "power sharing" required for the development of meta-learning goals (Aultman, et al., 2009). Reciprocity in a caring relationship means a relationship that is continually developing, negotiating and maintaining a social connection, as inevitably there will be tensions, conflict and issues of power and control balanced within the caring relationship. The development of this complex synergistic teacher-student relationship and effective interactions are significant elements and is the glue for learning in a learning community (Aultman, et al., 2009).

7b. An ethic of care through humour

When students are asked to identify characteristics that describe exemplary teachers, one of the first descriptors offered is, invariably a sense of humour. Students point to their favourite teachers as people "who made them laugh in a variety of ways and made class fun" (Pollak & Freda, 1997, p. 176). Glasser (1986), who includes fun in his list of the five primary needs of humans, along with survival, belonging, power,

and freedom, indicates that all of our behaviour is our constant attempt to satisfy one or more of those needs (Glasser, 1986 cited in; Pollak & Freda, 1997). According to Pollak and Freda, humour carries out multifaceted functions in physical education classes. Not only does it make learning fun, Pollak and Freda (1997) list the following benefits.

- Humour can create a positive spin on life.
- Humour is a social skill that helps a student to cope with stress, enhance his or her sense of well-being, alleviate unhappiness, depression, and anxiety, and boost self-image.
- Humour affects students' physiology and psychology, stimulates creative and flexible thinking, facilitates learning, and improves interest and attention in the classroom.
- Humour can be an extremely useful tool in building rapport. If a teacher can laugh at him- or herself and laugh with (not at) students, that teacher is “well on the way to establishing a positive climate and eliminating much of the stress that is often present in classrooms today.” (Pollak & Freda, 1997, p. 177)
- Humour can help students engage in the learning process by creating a positive social and emotional environment in which defences are lowered and students are better able to focus on and attend to the activities and information to be gained from those activities (Garner, 2006p177; Milton, et al., 2001).

Garner (2006) states that encouraging risk taking in learning is another area where teachers can use humour effectively. Teachers who present themselves as life long learners send direct messages to students about learning in a learning community. The “we’re all in this together” rhetoric is helpful for the modelling of attitudes, values and the resultant authentic actions. This can be empowering for students who are looking to establish their independence in a safe environment where the teacher is part of the learning team. Consequently the differences between the teacher and the learner are minimized and the similarities are maximized, giving students a feeling of control. The teacher can use humour and laugh at what he or she does not know, creating a relaxed yet caring environment that allows students to recognize their own

educational needs and be willing to take learning risks and learn (Pollak & Freda, 1997).

8. Synthesising it all: Inter-related entities and activity systems within physical education classes.

Physical Education learning communities are dynamic and complex sites with a multiplicity of socio-cultural influences impacting on the activity systems the participants must negotiate, live and learn within. Stith and Roth (2008) discuss the complexity and inter-related nature of class activity systems and entities in their book on co-generative dialogues. The relationship between systems and other entities within classes can be described as a “dialectical relationship”, which is defined as “two or more entities that are both mutually exclusive and mutually presuppose each other” (Stith & Roth, 2008, p. x). For example, student agency is inextricably related to the structure of the class although the two are separate entities. The agency of the students is constructed by the structure of the activity and in turn this agency constructs the structured activity. These authors continue to explain how these entities are co-constructed in such a way that one cannot exist without the other and yet are distinctly different. Most entities and activity systems within a class are dialectically constructed and although each is separate they are impacted on by other entities and one cannot happen without the rest (Stith and Roth 2008).

Rogers believes that when considering the goals of teaching in a learning community, all teaching is about negotiating and facilitating student empowerment in some way (Rogers, 1983) and consequently all class entities and activity systems have a dialectical relationship which conspire to facilitate student empowerment in learning (Stith & Roth, 2008). The ultimate goals, resources, role of students and teachers, social and meta-learning tasks and social structures of the environment all impact on student agency and learning.

Watkins (2005) believes that the teacher is the glue who holds and moulds all the class entities and activity systems into a coherent whole, promoting the goals of a

learning community. Teacher philosophies and beliefs about teaching and learning dictate the brand of glue they use, which influences how the entities and activity systems are implemented. Watkins (2005) devised two distinct camps based on the teacher beliefs about learning, within which the entities and activity systems are generated.

1. Learning = being taught (the jug and mug approach)

An instructional approach to learning which puts the focus on the teacher resulting in teacher centred approaches. The teacher predominantly makes all decisions about content, learning tasks, time and pace and resources used. Teachers are perceived as “jugs” which pour knowledge into the “mugs”, the students (Rogers, 1983; Watkins, 2005).

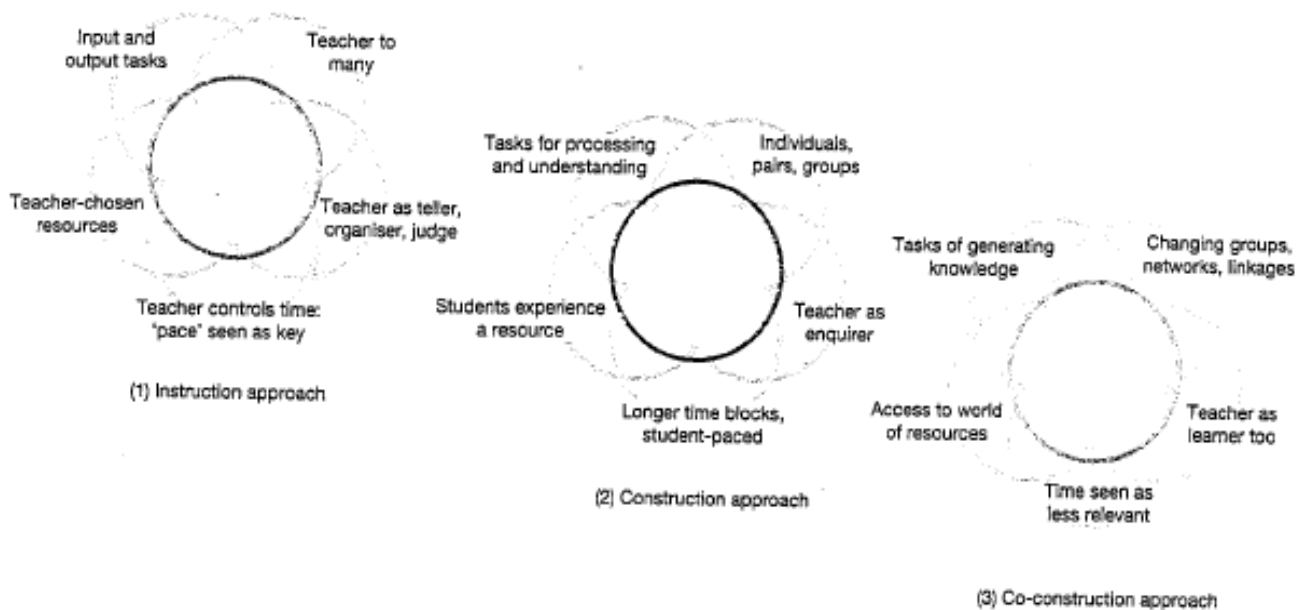
2a. Learning = individual sense making

The construction approach to learning where the focus is on the learner, which results in tasks emphasising students’ thinking and processing. Students are encouraged to develop and answer their own questions, to develop their own understandings and the students are seen as a learning resource (Watkins, 2005).

2b. Learning = constructing knowledge through doing things with others (the orchestral approach)

The co-construction approach to learning means the class is a learning community where the tasks are about creating knowledge as well as developing criteria and competencies for evaluating knowledge. The class works cooperatively, similar to an orchestra, to contribute to the knowledge (Watkins, 2005).

The following diagrams explain the differences in the classroom activity systems based on the three views of learning.



(Watkins, 2005, p. 20)

This diagram suggests that the class activities and entities are structures which change markedly depending on the beliefs of the teacher about learning. It is noted that teachers who believe learning occurs through people generating knowledge together have activity systems where students are taking responsibility for their own learning, and are able to work together with all community members to the point where the teacher learning alongside the students. Of the specifically physical education models, Experiential Learning, Mosston's Spectrum and Hellison's TPSR Model have the pre-requisite frameworks to support students and teachers co-constructing and generating knowledge together. Teachers will also adopt a role within the class and develop student-teacher relationships which promote student agency and learning community goals.

Summary

All of the above literature highlights the essential elements of a learning community in physical education. A learning community is developed from the foundations of a class community, where its participants exhibit altruistic and moral reasoning and behaviour. An essential construct of a class community is the professional yet

personal student teacher relationships which can contribute to facilitation of student learning about altruistic peer relations. Altruism or socio-moral learning outcomes are significant within the purposes of physical education and have traditionally had significant credibility with many commentators. Explicit teaching of the socio-moral domain has the potential to influence student's way of being within a physical education community through employing instrumental approaches. It is therefore possible to use movement as a vehicle to teach about the socio-moral concurrent with other outcomes. Proponents of learning communities believe that learning within a learning community is socio-cultural in nature and is about individual sense making, participants assisting each other to learn and students generating knowledge together. Within physical education there are models and methods which allow for socio-moral learning occurring simultaneously with participants inquiring and generating knowledge together. These are the essential constructs which underpin learning communities in physical education.

Introduction to chapter three

This chapter explores the theoretical framework, research design and methodology justifying and establishing the reasoning for the decision to use case study design for this study. It explores the nature of the relationship between the research paradigms, qualitative research and case study methodology. The core of the chapter focuses on the detail of the methodology and ethical concerns and finishes with exploration of the analysis and writing processes.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

The introductory chapter developed the background and context of this study and chapter two reviewed the literature used to inform this investigation. This chapter describes the social research approaches and design of the study in relation to the research questions. Initially, a brief overview of the theoretical framework and the associated research design will be discussed. At the heart of the chapter decisions about the case study design are illustrated, which lead to subsequent discussions about the allied methodology, analysis and writing processes. Limitations of the research design and methods will also be explored throughout the discussion.

1. Theoretical underpinnings.

Research does not happen in a vacuum but “in the social context of a community of scholars who share similar conceptions” (Sparkes, 1996, p. 443). Understanding the theoretical views of the world is about understanding the epistemological basis of the research, sending clear messages to readers about the researcher’s philosophical positioning for the study. A paradigm is a basic belief system or world view which guides the investigation (Guba & Lincoln, 2000) and the philosophical positioning of this study is grounded in the interpretative paradigm, where meaning is attached to the phenomena studied. Interpretative researchers interact with the subjects of the study to obtain data; inquiry changes both the researcher and the subject, and knowledge is context and time dependent (Krauss, 2005). Burrell and Morgan (1979) concur, describing the interpretative paradigm as being informed by a concern to understand the world as it is and to understand the fundamental nature of the social world at the level of subjective experience. The interpretative paradigm sees the world as an emergent social process which is created by the individuals concerned (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

In this paradigm researchers are required to gain first hand knowledge of the subject under investigation (Sparkes, 1996) and have an ideographic focus which aims to offer insights into how a given person, in given context, makes sense of a given phenomena (Sparkes, 1996).

This study is anchored in the interpretative paradigm as I seek to investigate the meaning of the beliefs, decisions, actions, interactions and thoughts of physical education teachers and students (Alasuutari, Bickman, & Brannen, 2008) with regard to understanding the establishment of learning communities. I am also situating the research within the humanist and critical paradigms for the purposes of interpreting and discussing evidence. The humanist paradigm contributes an understanding of philosophy and vision to the discussion and the critical contributes the ability to deconstruct hegemonic social relations. These three paradigms can work together to provide an in-depth and multifaceted analysis. Definition and discussion of humanist and critical paradigms and how they contribute to the research follows.

1a. Humanism in the *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum* (1999) and *New Zealand Curriculum* (2007)

The humanist and critical paradigms also inform the study and consequently contribute to the interpretation of findings, analysis and discussion. Humanism is a philosophical outlook that emphasises the intrinsic value, dignity and rationality of human beings (T. Davies, 2008; Rohmann, 2000). Humanist philosophers agree on the importance of values such as freedom, equality, tolerance and secularism. They believe in the unfettered use of the mind which should be applied to social and political reform to encourage individual creativity and to privilege the active over the contemplative life (Audi, 1999). The idea that human nature is perfectible and the humans can and should develop moral sense and responsibility is significant to humanist philosophers, who believe in hope for humanity and therefore value possibility and progress (Audi, 1999). Humanism is manifested in education and in this study, as the all-round development of the individual alongside the belief that human progress is dependent on moral sense, responsibility, open communication, discussion, criticism and unforced consensus (Audi, 1999; T. Davies, 2008; Farmer, 1984; Rohmann, 2000).

The uniqueness of humanity and possibilities for progress and change, as valued by humanism, is inherent within the philosophical underpinnings of the *HPE* (1999) and latterly the *NZC* (2007). The humanist philosophical construct of the “socio-ecological approach” is used as an underlying concept for physical education in both

the 1999 and 2007 curricula. The curriculum perspective of socio-ecological integration is “based on the assumption that the individual is unique and is in the process of internal change as a quest to achieve full personal integration in a changing environment” (Culpan, 1996/97). It argues that curriculum “can assist the individual to achieve this integration by balancing the priorities between the individual and societal concerns” (Culpan, 1996/97, p. 210). This aligns nicely with the *HPE (1999)* curriculum goal of “improving the social and learning environments of our schools, and enhancing the health prospects of all students in a changing and challenging 21st Century” (Tasker, 2004, p. 209). One of the ramifications of this philosophical positioning is that learning in physical education is promoted as “a process of development rather than a body of knowledge to be covered or learned” (Tasker, 2004, p. 209). This paradigm is used to explain philosophical positionings within the study.

1b. The critical paradigm

Critical theorists share some ideas of the interpretative paradigm, but what makes it different is that the critical paradigm focuses on oppression. Critical theory was born of academics from University of Frankfurt, otherwise known as ‘The Frankfurt School’ (Outhwaite, 2009). Seeking to build on Marx’s analysis of the nature of power relations gained through control of economic resources, critical theorists broadened the analysis to include hegemonic social relations, thus acknowledging the diverse reality of social control for disadvantaged and minority groups in society (Anyon, 2009; Outhwaite, 2009). Although there are diverse critical theorists and theories, there are some central shared assumptions common to all. The central tenet of critical theory is that of human emancipation, allowing people to gain knowledge and power to make informed decisions thus gaining control of their own lives (Anyon, 2009; Gibson, 1986, cited in Sparkes, 1996; Outhwaite, 2009).

In this study, critical theory is a useful analysis tool when considering the nature of power relations within education. It is also useful for the analysis of societal influences in an attempt to understand how practices in physical education are structured (Dewar, 1990), in particular physical education curriculum resourcing.

A combination of the humanist and critical paradigms can also be known as socio-critical humanism (Culpan, 2004) which is terminology used in the discussion related to the philosophical constructs of the *HPE* (1999) and physical education within the *NZC* (2007) documents. This paradigm applies to analysis and discussion of power relationships and the philosophical positioning of the physical education in the *NZC* (2007)

2. Research design

The qualitative research paradigm developed through the study of sociology, out of the “Chicago School” in the 1920’s and 1930’s, and established “the importance of qualitative research for the study of human group life” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 1). Qualitative research is “an umbrella term used to refer to several research strategies that share certain characteristics” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 2). Most qualitative researchers see what they produce as a “particular rendering or interpretation of reality grounded in the empirical world” (Bogden & Biklen, 2007, p. 27). There is logic in the decision to employ the interpretative paradigm for this research project as there is a natural and logical relationship between the interpretative paradigm and the qualitative research tradition, which produces “an interpretation of reality that is useful in understanding the human condition” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 22); the very intent of this study.

As this research project is situated in the interpretative paradigm it is therefore natural that the choices of methodology should reflect this. The purpose of the study was to understand the phenomena of a physical education learning community, which generated research questions specifically relating to understanding how this phenomena is created. A case study draws attention to the question of “what specifically can be learned about the phenomena being researched” (Stake, 2005, p. 443) and is the suitable approach to answer the research questions in this study. A case study can be described as a single instance of a bounded system, for example, a clique, a class, a school, a community (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Stake, 2005). Because there is only a single focus, the case study can “penetrate situations in ways that are not always susceptible to numerical analysis or may not occur in multi-subject

or multisite design and it is more likely to capture the complex and unfolding interactions of events and human relationships” (Cohen, et al., 2000, p. 181). Case studies resemble stories in works of literature or “human interest” and “thick descriptions” of the complexities of the case, “which enliven news reporting as they reflect the nature of reality as experienced by those who have been there” (Cohen, et al., 2000, p. 181). It includes rich descriptions of people, places, and conversations (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

Within this framework the aim was to describe the findings related to physical education learning communities in sufficient detail to allow the readers to “vicariously experience these happenings and draw conclusions” (Cohen, et al., 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 439). This study is an instrumental study which was undertaken for the purpose of helping to understand something specific in relation to a research question, in this case a physical education learning community (Thomas, 2009).

There was also concern about inaccuracy and being caught without confirmation of an interpretation. To reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation and to ensure validity and reliability the process of triangulation was used; a “ multi-level approach where two or more methods of data are collected to verify the validity of the data collected” (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Stake, 2005, p. 454). A case study gains credibility by “thoroughly triangulating the descriptions and interpretations, not just in a single step but continuously throughout the period of study” (Stake, 2005, p. 243). Triangulation is considered a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation (Neuman, 1997; Stake, 2005). Individual and focus group interviews, and observation methods appropriate for an in-depth exploratory case study were utilised (Yin, 1994).

This case study design was composed of interviews with four teachers; a focus group interview of six students and observations of a physical education class (9PE). As the purpose of this study was to gather information about the complexities of relationships in a physical education class and to ensure that sufficient detail and depth was collected it was necessary that the sample size was limited (Alasuutari, et

al., 2008). Once the research process was engaged this design did provide substantial richness and depth of data. It was a shortcoming of the study that time constraints and workload manageability did limit the interviewing of students and observations of classes to one teacher and class thus compromising the validity and reliability of the findings.

3. Methodology

3a. Sampling and access points

In a case study, researchers “scout for possible places and people that might be the subject or source of data, find the location they think they want to study and then cast a wide net trying to judge the feasibility of the site for data sources suitable for their purposes.” (Bogden & Biklen, 2007). To gain participants for my case study, professional networks were used and consultation with the professional organisation for physical education teachers, Physical Education New Zealand, (PENZ) Canterbury Branch. They were approached to identify teachers in the region who had the knowledge and expertise to contribute to my research. Participants were selected who were not representative of the wider physical education community as the interest was in teachers who would inform the research questions. This approach is supported by Thomas (2009), who argues that the language associated with selecting a sample is a misnomer, as the word sample itself suggests that the participants selected are representative of a larger whole. He suggests that this language should be abandoned in relation to small research projects such as this one with small numbers of participants with no intention of representativeness (Thomas, 2009). However, other authors believe this type of selection of participants is known as a purposive sample (Bogden & Biklen, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). As a case study is the detailed examination of one setting or a single subject or single depository of documents or one particular event (Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1994, 2005; Yin, 1994) it is appropriate that the sample size is exclusively small and selected purposively. This will ensure that a richness of detail and data is collected.

3b. Participants

As a teacher educator I had some knowledge of the teachers suggested to me by PENZ. Due to a desire to collect a richness of data, balanced alongside the need keep

within the bounds of reasonableness for a masters thesis, I selected four teachers who taught in co-educational lower and upper middle decile schools. I refer to the participants in the study as teachers and students. Pseudonyms are used in keeping with ethical protocol and anonymity.

- Clint: An experienced teacher of approximately 25 years and is a head of department. His school is co-educational decile seven school with diverse ethnicities.
- Linda: An experienced teacher of approximately 25 years and is a head of faculty in a co-educational decile seven school with diverse ethnicities. She has provided leadership in the physical education professional community.
- Brad: A teacher of physical education for approximately ten years in a co-educational decile seven school with diverse ethnicities.
- Mia: A teacher of approximately ten years, who teaches in a co-educational decile five school with diverse ethnicities.

I was aware that my professional relationship with the teachers could put the teachers in an awkward position should they wish to decline participation in the study. I therefore approached the teachers initially by email to provide distance to reduce any pressure they may have felt to accept. All four teachers accepted and I then had initial meetings with them to explain the study and collected written consent and ethical clearance approval (appendix 1). At this point I approached Clint to assist with data gathering activities related to observing a physical education class and a focus group interview with students. The selection of Clint for in-depth investigation took into account the varied contexts within which all the teachers were working and their availability.

From this point I asked Clint to suggest eight students for a focus group interview. Of the eight students asked, six participated in the focus group interview. The students were in Year Nine and consisted of three girls and three boys. The ethnicity of the group consisted of five Europeans and one Indian boy. The students were also diverse

in their compliance to school wide behaviour regulations with three students regularly referred out of classes outside of physical education or on individual behaviour contracts. At the time of the study all the students were positive participants in their physical education. Ethical consent forms were signed by parents and returned to me prior to the start of the research (see appendix 2).

It is important to acknowledge that in case studies there is always selection bias due to the small numbers of participants, however bias was the intention in this case study. However it is important to acknowledge that bias in relation to the selection of teachers and students has played a role in this study and this will have distorted the data gathered and influence the findings (Thomas, 2009). The selection of the students participating in the focus group interviews was decided by Clint as I had no knowledge of the students. We agreed that it was important that the students be confident enough to be able to contribute to the focus group discussion and therefore this immediately generated a selection bias. There is every possibility that selection bias occurred in the form of student liking of the teacher and teacher liking of the students (Davis & Lease, 2007). This may have influenced how the students were selected and therefore the data. It is accepted that this is a limitation of the study. As previously mentioned selection bias was inevitable in the selection of the teachers in the study as I was interested in teachers who could contribute to the research questions (Bogden & Biklen, 2007; Thomas, 2009).

3c. Data collection methods

In this case study I gathered information about “what is ordinary” (Stake, 2005, p. 453) in the happenings of a physical education learning community. The details of life that I was unable to observe were collected through interviewing the teachers and the students. The data was collected through semi-structured individual teacher interviews, small focus group interviews (six students) and ten observations of the class, 9PE, in physical education. Field notes and written evidence was collected at each stage, as these activities provided further depth and detail to the data collected as required to aid with reliability and validity of the data (Alasuutari, et al., 2008;

Bogden & Biklen, 2007; Burns, 2000; Cohen, et al., 2000). From these responses emerging themes were then identified.

3d. Research instruments

3di. Interviews

The design of case studies is necessarily flexible and researchers are continually looking for clues on how they might proceed. I was no different. Researching within a case study is a reflective process and therefore I began the process of collecting data, reviewing and exploring it and subsequently making decisions about where to go with the study (Bogden & Biklen, 2007). This reflective flexibility was provided to me through the use of semi-structured interviewing and observation as I was able to adjust my focus and direction as needed in response to the threads observed in the interviews (Bogden & Biklen, 2007). Semi-structured interviews enabled participants, be they researchers, teachers or students, to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view (Cohen, et al., 2000). Semi-structured interviews allowed me to guide the interviewee without fixed wording or fixed ordering of the questions based on their responses, at the same time giving direction to the interview so that the content focused on the crucial issues of the study (Burns, 2000). This permitted greater flexibility and a more “valid response from the participants’ perception of reality” (Burns, 2000, p. 424). I needed to be very flexible and responsive as participants often followed threads of conversation not anticipated (Patton, 2002). In hindsight, this interview structure did result in a myriad of rich and detailed data, although as a novice interviewer I did miss opportunities to follow threads which would have yielded interesting data. On reflection it would have been beneficial to plan to schedule further interviews for further exploration of missed themes.

Interviewing is a finely honed skill which requires a myriad of decisions to be made in action. Interviews are not neutral tools of data gathering but rather “active interactions between two or more people leading to negotiated contextually based results” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 698). Aware of the complexities of the power relationships which can be played out within the interview, I was anxious to develop a

shared approach to the study which allowed the teachers and the students the freedom to explore their thinking. I was acutely aware of my role as a University of Canterbury lecturer and wanted to avoid a researcher/interviewee relationship which could be seen as exploitative, as interviewing is inevitably political and contextually bound (Fontana & Frey, 2005). To ameliorate this tension I employed an empathetic interviewing approach where the interviewer becomes an “active advocate and partner in the study”, as I was hoping to tell the interviewee’s story (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 696).

To reduce the nature of the power relationship and in an attempt to ameliorate my inexperience, I requested that the teacher’s inform me about the possible themes they wished to discuss prior to the interview. By synthesising the questions and the teacher’s thoughts, themes were developed into a semi-structured interview schedule. Two of the teachers responded to this request, and I believe, due to time constraints and teacher work load, two teachers did not.

In the interview I followed a semi structured pre-determined question schedule which helped to focus explicitly on what I wanted to learn from the interview and helped with my inexperience in interviewing (Smith, 2008). Typically a semi-structured interview structure follows sequential themes, using open ended questions which allows for flexibility to follow threads of interest (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Patton, 2002; Schutt, 2009; Smith, 2008). To ensure that the structure of the interview and the interview questions were valid, I executed two pilot interviews which provided me with significant feedback which I then applied to the interviews (Bogden & Biklen, 2007).

Each teacher was interviewed once and separately at a venue of their choice. For two of the teachers this was at their school, one interview was held at the home of the teacher and the last one was held at my place of work. Each interview was just over an hour in duration.

The students in the study participated in one focus group interview which was one hour in duration and took place at the school. A focus group interview is a form of a group interview which relies on the interaction within the group, who discuss a topic supplied by the researcher (Cohen, et al., 2000; Morgan, 1988). I chose a focus group interview for the students for a number of reasons, including the ability to capture a range of opinions in a short time, and reduced levels of intimidation for the students (Cohen, et al., 2000). The interactions between participants were important and allowed the views of the participants rather than the interviewer to emerge, yielding insights that were not available to me in the teacher interviews or through observations (Morgan, 1988). As I was unknown to the students, shyness or intimidation could have been a limiting factor in the data collection. To build a rapport and reduce shyness I met with the students several times before the focus group interview and interacted with the students when appropriate before or after observing the class, all strategies necessary to ensure that the students felt comfortable about talking to me in the focus group interview (Neuman, 1997). For similar reasons I asked the students to complete a small task to orientate them towards the topics to be focused on in the interview (see appendix 3).

When planning the focus group interview I was conscious that simple teenage language would be needed and at times I used paraphrasing of questions to ensure understanding (Morgan, 1988). There was some difficulty managing the enthusiasm of the students and some students tended to dominate. I attempted to mediate this by redirecting questions specifically to the quieter members of the group.

All the student and teacher interviews were recorded by a digital dictaphone and the student focus group interviews were also video recorded to ensure that all voices were heard. At first the students were uncomfortable about the use of the video cameras in spite of prior notification, but as the interview progressed they became more comfortable and relaxed. All the interviews were transcribed.

3dii. Observations

Observational data are attractive as they afford the researcher the opportunity to gather live data from live situations (Bogden & Biklen, 2007; Burns, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Neuman, 1997). Observation of the teacher and the students in physical education began in November 2008 as the class were ending a Te Reo Kori unit of learning and continued into December where the unit topic was touch (rugby), taught in preparation for the junior school wide intramural touch tournament. The observations allowed me to view actual as well as reported behaviours (Cohen, et al., 2000). Observation enabled me to understand the context of the class, to see things that I had not considered from my reading or interviews and it allowed me to move beyond perception based data gathered in the interviews. For example, the nature of the relationships between the teacher and students and peers within the class became clearer. As I completed some observations of the class before the student and teacher interviews, it allowed me to ask participants about phenomena which arose from the observations. As a means of ensuring that my presence is unobtrusive I took a low key approach and became part of the class on a regular basis. Descriptive field notes were made during and after observations and meetings, which recorded of my own impressions and perspectives (Bogden & Biklen, 2007; Burns, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Neuman, 1997).

4. Ethical implications

Ethical considerations are paramount in research and must be at the forefront of a researcher's mind at all stages of the research (Schutt, 2009). Case studies are no exception and have special ethical considerations. No matter how hard a researcher using case study design strives to leave no trace, the very act of research imposes something unnatural on the situation (Schutt, 2009). During this research I was mindful of ethical protocols to ensure that participation was voluntary; that participant wellbeing was not compromised; that the informed consent was obtained for all participants and finally that confidentiality and anonymity was kept. To protect participant identity pseudonyms have been used. This study proceeded with approval by the University of Canterbury College of Education Academic Standards and Ethical Approval Committees which is closely aligned with the highest standards of accepted research ethics internationally. Participants were advised of the University of Canterbury complaints procedure should issues arise during the study. .

Although consent was gained for all participants in the group, I was aware that focus group interviews have unique ethical considerations in relation to social and emotional safety (Vaughan, Schumm, & Sinagub, 1996) as comments made by participants are public to the group and anonymity cannot be assured. Consequently, while the guarantee of total confidentiality and anonymity to participants is generally considered a pre-requisite of research, it is not possible to give such a guarantee in the focus group interviews (Morgan, 1988; Vaughan, et al., 1996). With this in mind, in meetings prior to the focus group interview I had conversations with the students about the importance of anonymity in discussions with others outside of the group to preserve their personal safety.

4a. Credibility and integrity

Patton (2002) states that as the researcher is employed as a tool, the credibility and integrity of a qualitative research project relies on the credibility and integrity of the researcher. Previous to this I have reported on my presence, abilities as a researcher, positioning and biases to mediate any weaknesses in the credibility of the study.

I entered the study with a view to exploring and communicating the teachers' voices and lives. To ensure the wellbeing of the participants and to reduce any anxiety, in pre-research meetings and again at the beginning of every interview, I stressed that I was not looking to judge the participants as I viewed the research as opportunity to tell the teachers' and students' stories about how the teachers established physical education learning communities (Greenwood & Te-Aika, 2009). Coherent with this approach, at each step of the research process it was intended that the participants would have input into the developing story (Greenwood & Te-Aika, 2009). It must be acknowledged that this intention became somewhat difficult due to the pragmatic considerations of workload, participant interest and ever decreasing amounts of time available for activities outside the realm of the workplace.

It is relevant that researchers be cognisant "that consciously or not, the participants entrust their words to the researcher for that purpose" (Limmerick, Limmerick, &

Grace, 1996, p. 457). This is a gift of self and words to the researchers and in this study to the physical education community. This is a gift that must be and is valued; it carries with it a responsibility by the researcher to ensure that the meanings of the words are interpreted as intended by the participant (Patton, 2002). To ameliorate any risk of misinterpretation the data was checked and rechecked and the transcripts and discussion chapters sent to the participants for comment or correction. It is intended that this process add to the study's credibility and integrity.

4b. Consent

The principle of respect implies a “moral concern for the autonomy and privacy of those recruited for research participation” (Fisher & Anushko, 2008, p. 99). Because of the nature of the harm which may occur during research with people, informed consent is a necessary pre-requisite to any study. Informed consent consists of ensuring that the potential participants should understand what they are agreeing to (Fisher & Anushko, 2008; Schutt, 2009). Written consent was sought from the Principal, Parents/Guardians of students, teachers and students who were to be involved in the research (see appendix 1 and 2) which was also accompanied by face to face discussions to ensure complete understanding of the nature of the study.

Written transcripts of their audio recorded data were provided back to participants for their consideration and/or correction to ensure that their comments and views are accurately represented. No responses from the participants were forthcoming, I suspect partly due to workload and time constraints.

It was important to acknowledge my interest and possible bias in the field of study. Collaborative and ethical behaviours were required in order to establish my credibility, trust and objectivity as a researcher. Neutrality is not possible in an interview as the interviewer is “a person historically and contextually located, carrying unavoidable conscious and unconscious motives, desires, feelings and biases” (Schuerich & McKenzie, 2005, p. 696). I was aware of my positioning in the interviews as two of the teachers had previously been colleagues and the remaining

two teachers I had taught as under-graduate students. This will have biased the data gathered; however as previously mentioned I took a number of steps to lessen the impact of the relationship.

5. Analysis

Qualitative data analysis tends to be inductive; the analyst identifies important categories of data as well as patterns and relationships through a process of discovery (Schutt, 2009). Qualitative analysis is also a reflexive process, where data is analysed as soon as it is collected and this processes continues throughout the data collection (Schutt, 2009). I engaged in an inductive reflexive process as I listened to each interview as it was completed, making notes to ensure correct meaning was derived and to ensure the meaning was consistent with the participants' views. This process facilitated the immediate beginnings of data analysis. As a novice researcher the understanding of the reflexive process developed as the analysis and discussion of the data continued.

Transcripts were returned to the participants to ensure that they were an accurate record of their views. None of the participants responded to the transcripts.

As I read and re-read the transcripts several times, making notes and highlighting data I perceived as important, themes began to emerge and as further reading and re-interpretation of data occurred it was often re-themed. Thomas (2009) described this as "the constant comparative method, where the researcher going through the data again and again comparing each element, phrase, sentence or paragraph – with all the other elements leads to theme and pattern identification" (p.198). Patton (2002) stated that "Finding patterns is one result of analysis. Finding vagaries, uncertainties and ambiguities is another" (p.437). A metaphor for the process of analysis is carving sculptures. The development of a rough outline is carved initially, followed by a process of shaping the stone into incrementally more detailed and significant aspects of the sculpture. As the refining process continues the carver goes over and over the sculpture and moves deeper and deeper into the 'noticing and refining' process until

the sculpture is polished to completion. This is similar to the analysis of data, which starts with the large themes initially and as each theme is reflected on repeatedly, the researcher moves deeper and deeper into the significant sub-themes or second order themes, eventually developing an understanding of the data (Cresswell, 2008; Thomas, 2009).

My research questions, theoretical framework and literature review influenced how I made sense of the ambiguities and how I constructed the overall themes from the data (Patton, 2002). For example, I understood that developing a class as community requires positive participant relationships and therefore I coded all data in relation to this theme. The analysis process was ongoing and it continued through out the writing of the literature review and the discussion chapters, therefore writing became part of the analysis (Schutt, 2009). This is a process which oscillated between one of immersion, thought crystallisation and writing and editing (Schutt, 2009). Through continuing analysis and writing it became clear that learning communities in physical education are altruistic in nature, thus developing a subtheme of socio-moral learning. The minor changes to the themes continued throughout the writing process.

Initially I developed three significant themes of community, relationships and pedagogy which, through a process of ongoing refinement and writing, eventually became four themes:

- Definitions of a learning community
- Social relationships in a learning community,
- Pedagogies used to develop learning community
- Philosophy to practice in a learning community.

These themes became the headings for the discussion chapters which directly relate to the research questions.

5a. Writing

I am including a description of the writing process of the discussion chapters under the auspices of analysis, as the writing was an analysis tool used to clarify thinking

(Schutt, 2009). The first writing was that of the literature review, which was both informative and significant as it was the first weaving together of the academic literature of school, based learning communities in a physical education context. The writing was also part of clarification and analysis process to make meaning of the findings. The writing of the discussion chapters was an intricate and messy process due to the complexity of the task and consisted of interactions between the literature review, the findings, the analysis of the findings and of the writing process.

To begin writing the discussion chapters, I drew on my knowledge of synetics to begin the creative process. Synetics is used to develop creativity through the use of metaphor, making the strange familiar, providing opportunities for creative cognitive processing and can aid in the conceptualisation or solving of complex tasks (Gorden, 2000). Gordon (2000) states that the creative process is similar in all disciplines and I have found the writing and analysis processes to be essentially creative and therefore similar in nature. I refer to the carving metaphor previously mentioned to illustrate this point, which demonstrates the creative nature of both sculpting and analysis and the writing processes (Gorden, 2000).

I started the writing process by considering the data and the literature review. I used the themes and subtheme headings as the initial discussion chapter headings. To make sense of the relationships between the themes and secondary themes I used the metaphor of an organic garden. This was useful as it allowed me to make sense of the complexity of the data through comparing similarities and identifying differences (Gorden, 2000).

The use of concept cards as a mapping activity facilitated my ability to organise chapters logically, which I was then able to use as a guide to writing the discussion chapters. Initially my writing was “woolly” as I just wrote as fast as I could, getting my ideas on the screen, as I wasn’t immediately expecting to “write a polished draft in a linear fashion” (Booth, Colomb, & Williams, 1995; Schutt, 2009, p. 547). I found that my thinking developed as I wrote, which caused me to discard, reorganize and rewrite (Schutt, 2009), similar to the carving process, where considerable stone is

discarded and features are refined through repeated reworking. Reflection on the writing process has been a useful learning activity, similar to one that could be used with students to learn about meta-learning in a learning community.

A carving is complete when the sculpture is balanced, aesthetically pleasing to the eye and conveys the messages you wish to tell. The process of analysis and writing is similar in that it is complete when the story is told. I knew the process of analysis and writing had finished when I felt that the story was complete and I had no further discussion to add.

Summary

This chapter has explored the overarching theoretical paradigms specific to this study and then described the nature of the relationship between the paradigms and pragmatic research practice. The chapter describes how this study has its roots in the interpretative paradigm which consequently allies itself to qualitative research design. Subsequently, it explained that case study design was the most suitable research methodology for the study, as it was intended that detailed and rich data contributing to thick description (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Stake, 2005) would be used to inform the research questions. The heart of the chapter informs the reader of the specific steps contributing to the research process alongside the reasoning for each decision made. The limitations of the research design are also explored. The latter stages of the chapter explore the details and implementation of research as an ethical activity as applied to this investigation. Finally, understandings of the creative process are explored through reflection on other creative experiences and compared to the analysis and writing journey (Gorden, 2000). It is found that the creative process is similar no matter what the context and similar processes were applied to the analysis and discussion in this study.

Introduction to chapter four

Chapter four is dedicated to presenting the data selected as evidence as gathered from the observations and transcripts. The evidence selected will be used to initiate and facilitate discussion in the following discussion chapters. The evidence has been

analysed and categorised into four major themes which directly relate each of the following discussion chapters in a logical fashion. The themes consist of:

- Definitions of a learning community
- Social relationships in a learning community
- Pedagogies used to develop learning community
- Philosophy to practice in a learning community.

Chapter Four: Findings of the study

Introduction

The findings detailed in this chapter have been selected through an analysis process described in the methodology chapter and will serve as evidence for claims made in the following discussion chapters. The evidence has been organised into four themes relating to the questions of the study and align with the chapters as follows.

- Part one: Physical education teachers establishing learning communities (as related to Chapter Five).
- Part two: Relationships as the foundations of a learning community (as related to Chapter Six).
- Part three: Learning activities promoting community: learning about the social and social learning (as related to Chapter Seven).
- Part four: Philosophy to practice in a learning community (as related to Chapter Eight).

Part One: Physical education teachers establishing learning communities

Presented in this section is evidence supporting the themes illustrating that physical education teachers do develop classes as learning communities. The following themes will evolve.

1. Activities and entities of a community.
2. Activities and entities of a learning community:
 - a. Inquiry and knowledge generation;
 - b. Reflection and meta-learning;
 - c. Co-constructed and negotiated curriculum;
 - d. Transfer of knowledge to other contexts as a characteristic of a meta-learning and a learning community.

1. Activities and entities of a community

The students from 9PE provided evidence of their class' positive peer culture, or sense of community. I asked the students what feeling they had about their class in physical education.

Kelsey: Everyone's just way more kind.

Alexius: Yeah everyone...helps each other.

Tim: If one or two people know [what they're doing], then they'll try and explain it to the rest of the class that don't know about it...say we're playing a sport or something and someone's...better at that sport or like plays it, they would try and encourage the other people who don't know how to play.

Logan Real cool. Comfortable.

Kelsey It would be the class that our class is closest in, in physical education.

Ellee: It's because we're not just sitting at a desk, we're actually getting involved, and we're all getting up and [using] teamwork and stuff.

Observations of Mr E's/Clint's class, 9PE, indicate that learning conditions are optimised through a peer culture which has been developed to the extent that each member's learning is supported by the environment (Alton Lee 2003). The positive development of student peer relations is central to the development of community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Rogoff, et al., 2001; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005). Field notes and observations contribute to provide validity and reliability to the student quotes.

7/11/ 2008. Monday afternoon.

When I first see this class they are totally absorbed in group tasks, developing Te Reo Kori, dances based on Maori legends. Every student is engaged in the group task and there is no prompting or support by the teacher. There is an atmosphere of energy, engagement, concentration and commitment. They look like cohesive groups communicating to achieve a goal. (Observers field notes)

21/11/08 Friday morning. 8.30am.

The task out at the field is for all teams to design and execute their own warm-up as a team. All teams sort themselves out in a short time and participate in warm-ups that are appropriate and involved everyone in the team. Every team completed the warm-up differently however all met the criteria for a successful and appropriate team warm-up. There is no teacher direction in this activity. (Observers field notes)

This evidence supports the students' comments about the peer culture of their class. It suggests that the students in 9PE are able to work co-operatively and collaboratively with others, without supervision, evidence they are engaged in a learning community.

Further evidence provided by the teachers suggests that their students demonstrate socio-moral attributes such as caring and supporting others, which contribute to others learning and to the development of community.

... a couple of the 1.1 assessments in Year Eleven talk about Hauora. We ask them to look at how they impact on others and some of what they write is just extraordinary! When you question them about it...they finally work out what they've done for somebody else and how meaningful it was. (Brad)

I think they start to realise when we learn about how your wellbeing is affected by your participation [in physical activity]. They want to give out to someone because they've got something [to give] and they feel really good about what they've got...they feel that they're a better person [for it]. (Clint)

The above quotes can be regarded as evidence supporting the notion that teaching about the socio-moral contributes to students' understanding of belonging in a learning community.

2. Activities and entities of a learning community

Instrumental approaches to learning

The teachers in this study develop learning activities in movement contexts which allow the students to learn about socio-moral learning outcomes and community. This is often achieved through teacher questioning to facilitate student reflection. The teachers are making the decisions about the learning activities within movement contexts and the focus of the reflection; however the students are required to solve the problems.

...so there's a whole series of things...in games and activities, that you can draw all this stuff [learning] out of... and get them to realise that ...what we're about, which is not so much the activity, but what's sitting underneath it. (Clint)

We do lots of group activity-based things where the students are given responsibility to solve a problem, [for example] to get the group up there and do a performance. (Linda)

Instrumental approaches and teacher driven student reflection is identified as a significant activity contributing to the development of a “fledgling” learning community.

2a. Inquiry and knowledge generation promoting agency and responsibility

Evidence from the interviews and observations indicates that the teachers structure learning tasks to allow groups to solve problems to promote student agency and responsibility. This can be viewed as inquiry; students generating collective knowledge.

So quite often I'll set up a [activity] so it falls down. I hand it over and say 'I'd like you to try something... go for it' and don't give them too many instructions about it, then that gives them the opportunity for things not to go right. (Brad)

Simple things like using a mix of things like TGFU and experiential learning model and all of those sorts of things together. So like in touch [it] might be

that you've taught them to or they know how to dump and pass. You say...
'let's imagine you've got three defenders there, how are you going to this
work out? (Linda)

Watkins (2005) and Brown (1997) believe that learning communities use inquiry and
knowledge generation processes, where students generate their own solutions.

...we talk quite a bit about empowerment, allowing them to do things and then
we de-brief. (Brad)

You're creating situations for them that they have to work out for themselves.
(Linda)

Further evidence of inquiry and problem solving will be included in part three of the
findings: Learning activities promoting community: learning about the social and
social learning, aligned with the social pedagogies promoting social learning.

2b. Meta-learning and reflection

The teachers state that they explicitly teach the students about meta-learning.

...often, we'll have an activity and [I'll say] ...I've chosen this because this is
for those of you who...[like to learn in this way]. (Mia)

Developing students' understanding of their learning preferences is believed to
contribute to students' understanding of meta-learning.

Getting [them] interested...in what they do best, just so when it's not their
preferred option, [them understanding] how can they go about [it] again and
succeeding. (Mia)

Mia also believed that understandings about meta-learning could be explored by the students when learning about revision techniques.

I do it around revising. How could you revise it and how could you study it so teaching those skills with that. Mia)

Students understanding their learning is an essential ingredient for the establishment of a learning community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005)

Three teachers talked about the use of the experiential learning cycle as useful for developing students' understanding of their own learning skills.

When we use [experiential learning]...we're saying look, these are the steps we can put in place to improve what we're doing...I think they definitely recognise a requirement that they would need to reflect on something that they've just done, question it, and look for improvements. (Brad)

Reflection on activities and about learning through a structured debrief was valued by all teachers in this investigation. The reflective debrief had a dual purpose as it was used to facilitate learning on and about movement activities as well as allowing students to understand their own and others' learning.

[To] understand what they've learnt and how they've learnt it, to consider why it might be important to them personally...and that might be in conversation or through de-brief. [Reflection is] ...a way of getting them to consolidate their own learning. (Linda)

Reflection for the development of students' meta-learning skills is regarded by Watkins (2005) as an essential component of a learning community.

2c. Co-constructed and negotiated curriculum

Linda and Mia believe that a learning community not only takes responsibility for their own and others learning, but ultimately they negotiate, plan and execute their

own learning. These beliefs are reflected in the pedagogy these teachers choose to implement. Linda believed if

I had [students] operating as a learning community I would want ...to see them leading their own learning. (Linda)

Through further questioning Linda elaborated on her ideas of co-construction of learning activities within a learning community.

I have done this actually, more around what tasks do you want to do to meet this [achievement] standard, [allowing them] to make that choice.

She believed that if students had choice and control over their own learning, they are more likely to be engaged and they would be more motivated to engage in deep relational learning processes (Biggs & Moore, 1993).

Through the use of Hellison's Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) Model, Mia is continually negotiating and co-constructs learning activities and programmes with students. Negotiation and co-construction of learning is inherent within this model to allow students to develop personal and social responsibility.

... The goal is that within term four...[the students] take... responsibility... The unit is [called] 'summer celebration.' So... [I discuss with the students] what is summer celebration?...They just take that on and adapt that to themselves.

Mia negotiated with the students how they would learn and achieve the term four learning outcomes.

I photocopied off the department programme and gave it to them and said... 'This is what we have to do but how are we going to go about doing it?' So as a class we wrote units up, [the students] presented them to the class and then they voted which one they wanted. (Mia)

Ultimately Mia's vision is that the students will take responsibility for their own physical activity developing their learning about responsibility.

We're going to build a physical education programme...through which there will be some more structured time, and in which there will be completely unstructured time. That's negotiable [time for you]... Unstructured means student-decided time coz it has to be negotiated, it has to have a purpose, a meaning and...they have to be responsible for doing the paper work..(Mia)

2d. Transfer of knowledge to other contexts as a characteristic of a learning community.

The students did provide some confirmation that they did, at times, transfer socio-moral learning to other contexts.

Stephen: I use [it] sometimes when I'm playing soccer, I yell encouragement to the others, lots...and then [when] you start doing...it gets easier

Tim: Like weekend sports teams when sometimes there's a team of thirteen and ten people are like real good and like three other people aren't. [I] just give them encouragement.

Alexius: I find I use it a lot with my swimming coach 'cause like me and him don't see eye to eye on things. The kind of stuff Mr E does has kind of been to talk and communicate with people and I felt like, with my coach, it's been really good, 'cause, when he would get quite angry at me, now I know how to talk to him and I'd tell him how I felt.

Meta-learning according Watkins (2005) is essential for transfer of knowledge generated to other communities and contexts.

Part two: Relationships as the foundations of a learning community:

Part two of this chapter presents the evidence to be used for discussion in chapter five. This evidence will highlight the themes as follows.

1. Building student teacher relationships within a community.
 - a. An ethic of care and trust as a basis to student teacher relationships.
 - b. Caring as a contributor to the development of mature relationships.
 - c. Managing student behaviour through an ethic of care.
 - d. Humour as a relationship builder and an ethic of care.
2. Diversity.
 - a. Teachers use class sessions to value diversity and establish community.
3. Participant roles in a community.
 - a. The role of the teacher as facilitators.
 - b. Empowering students and reducing the power differential.

1. Building student teacher relationships within a community

The teachers highlighted a number of teacher initiated behaviours that clearly contribute toward the development of positive student teacher relationships and ultimately a physical education community. They all used similar strategies to develop positive relationships within the class.

Mia took the opportunity, in a formal way, to develop relationships with the students by presenting a mihi at the start of the year. This encapsulates the notion that giving something of yourself contributes to the development of meaningful relationships.

There's always something they can relate to [in my mihi] and I try to be quite clinical in the focus I have, I've sort of got something that hopefully everyone can relate to, like riding a motorbike when I was younger... I thought that the farm photos and all those kind of things hopefully provide that hook in for students. (Mia)

All the teachers believe that developing individual relationships with students is significant to the developing positive class culture. Taking an interest in each student as an individual and making a personal connection is regarded as being essential to the development of positive teacher: student relationships and positive class culture. The teachers explicitly plan to develop positive relationships with students by noticing and talking with each student as an individual.

I will always make a point of trying to make individual contact with as many kids as I can, either when they're lining up coming in, during the lesson, on their way out... 'Did you watch Shortie Street or how's your horse going?' Connecting with them as people and not me, teacher: you, [the] student, so just on... that level, as a person.. Linda)

...it's asking a question or definitely making eye contact with someone... giving them a smile...you try and say hello to as many people as you can as they walk past you. [For example] you say hello to someone when they're walking in and don't get a hello back so you follow them down the corridor – "hello, hello, hello! Oh, so you did see me, that's good. Thought I was invisible!" (Brad)

The relationships are developed in a number of contexts around the school

...those interactions just aren't happening in physical education. I look to them in health, and sometimes students are more receptive to those conversations in a classroom situation..(Mia)

Acknowledgement of individual student strengths was discussed as a means for the students to initiate a relationship with the teacher.

...a number of boys come up to me... they want me to know what they're good at physically. I also think [that] some of those people really want to show you that it's the one thing they're good at and that's their self esteem." (Clint)

Clint thought that taking an active interest in the students and their activities, especially sport, is an important aspect of the teachers role.

That's them building a relationship with you because they think that we're really interested in sport and that that's what it's about. (Clint)

...using it as a learning tool and so you have a relationship with those kids and you can sort of build into that in different way. (Clint)

1a. An ethic of care and trust as a basis to student teacher relationships

Positive student teacher relationships are a concrete manifestation of an ethic of care and trust within the relationships. An ethic care is manifested in the way the teachers interact with the students in a range of contexts and was identified as being significant by both teachers and students.

....[students are] valued and their opinions are important and the way they feel is important... [Students] just want to know that you care... I think they want to get a little bit of attention and just to check that you care. You let them know that you do, then they just [think] "ok that's good. I know he cares I don't want [the attention] now." (Brad)

Trust was seen as an integral and essential part of the student teacher relationship and is identified by the teachers as a central entity for the development of a cohesive class community.

...[the thing] which [enables]...a positive culture within the class is that trust in me. There has to be that relationship develop, and it has to develop at a personal level, not just me being personal with them but the students being personal with me... the students feel valued, they feel a connection, it's something that we have in common. (Mia)

The personal relationship based on an ethic of care and trust provides the impetus which facilitates student engagement with the teacher and physical education. As Mia explained,

[Trust] in me provides the hook, that's the buy in [needed for student engagement]. (Mia)

Brad believes that role modelling trusting, caring and respectful relationships with the students results in students treating each other in a similar manner.

...I use role modelling...and as a result, [the classes] tend to be pretty caring and respectful of each other most of the time...I want to be seen as something really positive. I want to be seen as a happy, positive, relaxed, calm, enjoyable person because then that's the way they treat you and then you are that person is real. (Brad)

I think role modelling conflict situations, role modelling good manners [is important]. [For example] the runner coming in the door, saying hello to the runner... Especially when they're seniors and a junior comes in the door... They come in and they feel awkward and they walk out the door and you say [to the senior class], 'why do they feel awkward? What can we do to make them feel less awkward?' So I think the role modelling of those ...conflict situations when you don't get upset and angry...that you just deal with the behaviour [is important for learning]" (Clint)

1b. Caring as a contributor to the development of mature relationships

Developing a mature relationship is another important component for the construction of the positive teacher student relationships.

...[The students] start to develop more adult relationships. Students start to learn how to operate as a young adult and that just comes down to responsibility. I have a much more caring relationship. [It's] on a different level than just liking you as a teacher. So I think they develop a more meaningful relationship with an adult. (Mia)

...you treat them more like adults. You're [saying you're] just the same as me, I've just been around a bit longer. (Linda)

The maturing of student teacher relationships allows for reciprocated care and trust, allowing for further learning conversations pre-requisite for the development of a learning community. This relationship allows teachers to mediate the nature of the power relationships with students, moving towards a role as a facilitator.

1c. Managing student behaviour through an ethic of care

The teachers in this study discussed how they manage the students' behaviour which is inappropriate. The teachers frequently talked about having conversations with the students about their behaviour and the consequences of the behaviour. The students appreciated this approach.

[I use a] lot of a lot of questioning them about their behaviour, the effect on them, the effect on others, how others might see them and will relate to them. 'Cause we're trying to change their behaviour and I don't want them to change their behaviour because they're scared of me or they don't want a detention, again we want them to learn something from it and we want them to change because they understand why. (Brad)

The students concurred with Brad's perceptions of managing student behaviour and appreciated the ethic of care demonstrated and the nature of the student teacher relationship this approach portrayed. The students had the following perceptions:

Ellee: He teaches you, he tries to get you to learn, not just "oh you're getting referred." He tries to teach you something. Yeah, like, not just take the easy way out.

Alexius: Like about life and stuff. He makes us learn from our mistakes
...

Tim: He tries to correct you. Some teachers...if you're being naughty in class they'll just refer you and then they don't realise that...it's not really correcting you, it's just like sending you to a room and pretty much giving you a free period.

Kelsey: ...once he referred me, and I came to come back here at the end of the period and he... talked with me...[about how] could

keep me [from getting a job] ... when I'm older... It shows that he cares, you know.

To these teachers, managing student behaviour is not about compliance or making their teaching easier but about students learning how to contribute positively to their own and others learning and to the class learning community. Brad identified the tensions faced by teachers about student learning about community as opposed to developing compliant students making teacher lives easier. For example,

... in the past we've had a number of discussions around the certain ways that we want [the students] to be and behave so...they work well in their groups...do we want them to do that so that the class runs better and the job's easier for us and we use it as a classroom management tool, or [is it so the students have] got to have an understanding of why it it's important, where it's getting them and why they're important skills for them to take on for themselves and to take on into the future. (Brad)

Interestingly, managing student behaviour through learning does has the positive spin off of an improvement in the compliance of the class.

They are becoming quite compliant because we keep hammering these things [by] saying "this is the way you should be." It does make the class work better. (Brad)

The compliance versus student learning debate is school wide. Brad believed that the school values were sometimes used to mould the students into being compliant as opposed to developing their understanding of learning how to behave in multiple communities.

We sometimes feel that the school 'values' are a set of things that are bought down on top of the kids like a template for them to fit in to. Sometimes we feel that it's not necessarily about educating the students to become better people, but it's a way of managing the kids. Let's express it in do's rather than don'ts, so it feels more positive. If everyone does this then we have a nice school that works well, it [helps] everyone [learn] better...we want them

to have a whole lot of understanding and learning behind [the values] that so that they can then take that into another context. (Brad)

Coherent with the teachers' beliefs about learning, when conflict situation arise with a student, the teachers choose to treat the students in a mature manner. Their preferred modus operandi is to utilise conflict resolution skills as described by Brad.

Win-wins as much as possible. Win for me, win for the student...I wouldn't necessarily say compromise 'cause I wouldn't want to get into a situation where I'm compromising too much with students 'cause it's just there's some things you have to do and I don't really want to compromise those things. So if we can find win-wins then that's better than compromising 'cause then we both lose. (Brad)

This attitude towards teacher-student conflict is an example of the teacher beliefs about developing respectful relations with students and viewing every situation within their classes as a learning opportunity for both teachers and students.

1d. Humour as a relationship builder and an ethic of care

Humour was a theme which surfaced through-out all interviews. Humour is used to build positive relationships, to engage the students in learning, to manage student behaviour and to have fun.

I tease the girls and I put myself down a lot. [I'll say] 'oh this team's one short, now you've got the option, you can go with four or you can call on the big dumpty,' which is me, 'but look seriously if you do you're probably going to struggle so it's up to you. (Brad)

Brad will also joke about his ability to add value to a team giving students the opportunity to reciprocate the teasing.

I also talk myself up...I'll call myself the superstar as well. I'll say, 'right everyone gets a chance to have a superstar but just for one game, once you've

had me on your side for more than one game your team would win too many times, so you get to pick me for just one'. Brad)

The reciprocated teasing was also mentioned by Mia.

...and sometimes I've found that the commonality is that we love this banter at the start of class about why you've forgotten your gear. (Mia)

The students commented a number of times about fun, the use of humour and respect by Mr E to facilitate learning.

Logan: He uses humour so he makes you feel like the classes are really good fun.

Alexius: Mr E also kind of teaches us life skills as well. He's real good. It's not just all fun with him, but it is fun if you know what I mean.

Tim:: He just... makes us laugh.

Alexius: Instead of being like "neughneughneughneugh" he just will...make fun of them. Not in a bad way! ...just so they know that what they're doing is silly or something ...[or] he'll be like "oh the referral book's here, come and write yourself a referral" so you know you're... in the wrong."

Ellee: ...he's easy to get along with because you can relate to that kind of [humour].

The students identified that the teacher's attitude and moods impacted on the atmosphere of the class. Good humour was appreciated by the students.

Logan: If a teacher's like happy and in a good mood they'll find the kids more responsive... if there's a teacher that's real grouchy, everybody will be grouchy too.

It would seem that humour portrays an ethic of care through building rapport and encouraging students to engage in the learning process (Aultman, et al., 2009).

2. Diversity.

Often the range of diverse of students within classes could be problematic for the teachers. The most significant problem was the inability of the students to work together in a positive manner allowing learning for all members of the class which created barriers to the development of a learning community.

So when you've got too many overseas students and... they don't interact [with others] then that could create some bad dynamics within the class. In terms of wellbeing and looking at culture and culture conflict, some of these students ... have a culture that they have to follow and also the kiwi culture and there's a conflict between that. (Clint)

Clint identifies that it is difficult for both students and teachers when the diversity in the class leads to the isolation of some groups of students.

2a. Activities valuing diversity.

The teachers talked about activities allowing students to develop relationships and explore the diversity of their classes, developing tolerance and to break down stereotypes. For example, Mia begins each class at the start of the school year with a mihi. This initiates the development of positive student teacher relationships in a bicultural manner.

I've made up a mihi on a PowerPoint. I go through my culture and my heritage and where my family's come from and what that means to me and why I do what I do and why in class when sometimes..(Mia)

Mia has an explicit focus, through the implementation of the higher levels of Hellison's TPSR Model, to ensure that students understand that it is their responsibility to include all class members in learning activities.

...[this level is] not just about you, it's not just about you meeting your needs which is running the group, you've actually got to...care for others...within the class and that includes people who are not like you. Have you organised

activities that...can everyone be included, are there any particular things that you need to think about?

It is significant that this quote highlights the dialectical relationship between student responsibility for others and an ethic of care for others in your community. This is an important theme identified in the evidence.

2b. Teachers use class sessions to value diversity and establish community

Alton Lee (2003) states that teachers who optimise learning conditions use class activities to create a class discourse which values diversity. Linda takes steps to normalise diversity and difference.

...[I try] getting them to understand really clearly that everybody has had a different set of background experiences and that brings us all to a different place and that's ok. (Linda)

Linda dedicates time and opportunities for students to have conversations with each other about differing life experiences, facilitating the deconstruction of the assumptions student may make about diverse others.

... if I've got a lot of overseas students in the class I'll do a little activity with assigning the gym as the world and going and standing on the place where you were born and just getting them to understand that... Finding out that some of those kids have been schooled in English schools and their English is just as good as ours but their experiences are different. (Linda)

For Linda the explicit learning activities are about students learning the norms and values of a learning community.

I guess it's just a building of tolerance really and I guess tolerance and respect helps connections. (Linda)

Part of the norms and values of a learning community in Linda's physical education classes are characterised by presenting diversity as a richness which "we" can all learn from.

The more people we meet and the more we get to know each other within the class, the richer we all will be both as a class and as individuals. (Linda)

Linda represents the class as "we", which is a term which is inclusive of all class members.

Mia discussed the teachers' ability to value the knowledge that diverse students bring to class. It requires teachers to be flexible and adaptable enough to allow students to share their knowledge. Te Reo Kori is a common context utilised by the teachers in this study for the explicit valuing and learning about diversity. This can evolve into an opportunity for student centred exploration of the diverse cultures within the class.

Like today we were doing Te Reo Kori but there were no Maori students in the class, there was Tongan, Kazakhstan, there was a few Samoan boys, an Indian girl, there was a really neat diverse mix...one of the boys...was banging [the rako] on the floor and I found out that they were drumming...the Samoan boys decided that they would like to teach that timing to the class. It was the same activity but that gave [the students] a sense of pride and it also allowed other students to learn something different. It had a bit more of students focus to it." (Mia)

Exploring diversity is also achieved by confronting the diversity of the class, exploring any misconceptions and assumptions held about diverse others. Linda believes that this is the most effective strategy for developing a learning community.

I think that I've learnt that it's probably better to actually be really up front about the [diversity of our classes]. Identifying the fact that we've got...these six people here while you might think they're Asians, they're Asian New Zealanders...They might've even been born here and then linking that in with discrimination and how we might judge people because of where they're from or what they've done or what they can't do.

The explicit teaching about diversity occurs in a number of different ways.

This happens through explicit teaching and learning activities as well as the teachable moment but also looking at giving those overseas kids opportunities to show their strengths. Like games that they've done a few years ago. There were some Korean kids doing the thing with the two long poles of bamboo it's kind of like French skipping. Wow! (Linda)

The students commented that as the year progressed the overseas students became integral members of their Physical Education class community.

Alexius: Even the Koreans are getting involved now.

Kelsey: In fact at the start of the year they used to speak in their little group, but now they're all...getting into separate groups and ...getting involved.

Tim: 'Cause at the start of the year they didn't really...know who people were but...in PE you sort of see what people are sort of like

Alexius: Physical education brings out their personality.

3. Participant roles in a community.

Prior to the interviews teachers were asked to identify their pertinent themes in relation to the development of physical education communities. These themes were woven into the interview by the researcher. A theme identified by the teachers was the role of teachers and students in a learning community. The role of the students included managing self and ensuring all members of the community are included in all activities.

I would say to the students...currently Jacks not involved with this, and you're running an activity for the group, how would you include Jack? ... yet how would you still meet everyone else's needs...the person who ran that little activity tended to take a bit more ownership over Jack and just cajoled him along." (Mia)

Hellison's TPSR Model allows opportunities for students to make decisions and choices about their own learning and learning activities. The students come to recognise that they have rights in decision making however they learn that there are responsibilities that are closely aligned to their rights. In this role the teacher becomes a negotiator more than a facilitator.

...if you want more rights and responsibilities then there's more responsibility [for you] and rights that come with that. If you want to give up some of [your responsibility] then I will take that on and [your rights will be reduced]. (Mia)

Clint viewed the development of positive peer relations as the responsibility of the students, which he promoted through teacher talk which contributes to a discourse of community.

.....[I want the students] taking responsibility for themselves and engaging others, bringing others into the activities who are stand-offish, including them and being the person who makes a positive difference [I say to them].... that you need to be someone who encourages other peoples' participation, not squashes their participation..." (Clint)

The teachers are very specific about the behaviours and interpersonal skills the students need to contribute to a learning community

...[it is your responsibility] to empower someone to lead, [and your responsibility to] follow them, you must be a really good active listener, you also must engage within the group, you've gotta actually involve them...[when] you're asked to contribute your idea of what you think, you contribute your idea...so that everyone can function. (Clint)

Mia believed that the role of the students is to take responsibility their behaviour and learning. For example she is often asked how she manages the behaviour of the students off site. Her stance is "I don't, because I don't have to be responsible for that." She states that if the students chose to take on the right to make decisions then they take on the responsibility and teacher trust inherent in that choice

I certainly don't put students in a position where they are going to run away and smoke out the back field but then if they choose to do that then there's consequences to those choices...the biggest consequence is that they've let me down. They also have to face me and they have to have those conversations with me...they actually don't want to let me down [as] they've actually been given this chance often they haven't been given before. (Linda)

3a. The role of the teacher as facilitators

All teachers consistently viewed their role in the teaching and learning process as a facilitator. The teachers actively encouraged students to take responsibility for their own and others learning and consequently chose teaching models, methods and strategies which positioned both the teacher as a facilitator.

[I see myself] very much as a facilitator for want of a better word, the person that puts things in place to create their learning really. I probably try to empower them as much as I can and limit my control to organisational things that [allow learning] to happen. (Linda)

After a period of time I would hope that they see me as someone who has to step up when I need to take control of it but who would prefer to stand back and let them take ownership of it once they've got enough knowledge or content. (Clint)

The majority of the teachers viewed their roles in a learning community as a facilitator. However Mia viewed her in a slightly different manner, as she saw her role as a negotiator who:

...constantly renegotiating individual boundaries, but also group and class boundaries within the class. (Mia)

This is consistent with the approach required for Hellison's TPSR Model, the model which guides Mia's philosophy and practice

3b. Empowering students and reducing the power differential

The set up of the physical environment and developing a “way of being” within the physical education class was seen as important in the developing the students understanding of community. Linda and Clint identified that a physical manifestation of equitable power relationships is dialectically related to increased student responsibility and decrease teacher power, which contributes to the positive student teacher and peer relations.

...the only two ways I probably have a class around me, one will be a circle where we all see each other so I’m just in the ring with them or that they’re in front of me. I’m trying to point out that this isn’t about me being above you.

It was observed that Clint also used similar strategies.

The teacher is waiting in the gym, sitting on a low chair. The students gather around him in a semi circle and sit down. (Field notes)

This evidence provides information which will be further used in chapter five, to discuss the role of the relationships within a learning community. The evidence suggests that effective altruistic relationships are essential for the development of a learning community.

Part three: Learning activities promoting community: learning about the social and social learning.

Part three of this chapter presents the evidence used to discuss how the teachers develop the altruistic social relations necessary for a learning community. It will explore links to the *NZC (2007)* and also the “socio-cultural” pedagogies employed by the teachers. The evidence will be presented as follows.

1. Learning about the social; the explicit teaching of attitudes and values.
2. Socio-cultural and social learning pedagogies.
 - a. Conversations and Questioning.
 - b. Problem Solving and inquiry through group work.
 - c. The warm up as a leadership learning activity.

1. Learning about the social: the explicit teaching of attitudes and values

Three of the four teachers discussed the explicit teaching of values, as identified in the *HPE (1999)*, as important in the development of positive class culture. At the start of the year the teachers deliver a unit of learning about the school values, which is explicitly teaching about the attitudes and values which contribute to a positive class culture.

Our first unit of work involves developing a class culture... called the ‘school values’ in action. There we’re identifying the school values and we’re teaching around those values. We make a poster and a symbol...but it should probably involve some of their goals [and] certainly should involve their values that they choose as a class... I always try to encourage mine to come up with some sort of a saying. [for example] ‘serf’s up’...and S-E-R-F stood for respect, effort might’ve been selflessness (Brad)...

The teachers use this activity to facilitate students’ understanding of the underlying values they need to apply for the development of an altruistic learning community. The process continues by identifying what the values actually look like in action in the class:

...then we have to look at what values we have to put in place to make sure that we can achieve those things together. Then from the values we then try and glean out what behaviours will then be essential for us to achieve these things. Those behaviours have gotta come out of the values and... should we do these things, we should be able to achieve what we set out to. (Brad)

Clint corroborates the evidence Brad provides.

I think right from the start what I do with Year Nine is just to get them to understand our curriculum and there are a set of qualities that the school believes in called 'the 'school values...That...personal quality (teaching socio-moral outcomes) for us is part of our achievement objectives.

The teachers believe that the positive class community is created by developing a class set of attitudes and values with the students.

It's all about that participation and involvement.... [it's] a set of attitudes and values that the students buy into. They either have [attitudes and values] or through the process of creating...[the positive class culture] they buy into it....through a whole series of things that occurred, a large proportion [of students] are often persuaded to buy into it. (Clint)

Explicit teacher talk about teamwork was identified by the teachers as a significant contributing factor in the development of a class community.

....one of the first things that I want them to do is start to think that they're going to be a team throughout the year. I always use little phrases and things to support that like "together to get there," those sorts of things. So that together should we get our class culture positive and get it right, then we're all going to go a lot further (Brad)

The development of students' roles through the explicit teaching of leadership, followship and teamwork was discussed. This was emphasised by all teachers as a major contributor to the positive class culture as well as a valued learning outcome from the Health and Physical Education Essential Learning Area of the *NZC (2007)*.

The teachers believe that this content is highlighted to the students via teacher questioning and promotes students reflection on the activity.

Especially when you're doing group work, I want [the students] to allow someone to lead, that's... empowering someone. [I question the students about] who in that situation or circumstance has some sort of skill that could [lead]? It could be physical (motor) skill [knowledge] and in other situations it could be a verbal skill discussion-type [knowledge]...if you're going to allow them to [lead] ...there are a certain series of behaviours that need to happen cooperatively in a group. (Clint)

Through further questioning it emerged that the teachers felt that explicit teaching of interpersonal skills is necessary to empower the students to manage and lead a group. This is the explicit teaching of followship.

[I say to the students]...if you're going to empower someone to lead, then you must follow them, you must listen to them, you must be a really good active listener, you also must engage within the group, you can't be a space watcher, you've gotta actually [be] involved them... [When] you're asked to contribute your idea of what you think, you contribute your idea, when you're asked to perform...then you do that...so that everyone can function. (Clint)

2. Socio-cultural and social learning pedagogies

Learning about the social requires social learning opportunities and therefore social pedagogies. The explicit teaching of the socio-moral through social learning activities, teacher questioning and conversations with individuals and the collective emerged from the evidence. The findings indicated that the teachers are adept at designing teaching and learning activities which facilitate students learning about the socio-moral through movement contexts. Clint further developed the theme related to leadership and followship by explaining his teaching activities related to teaching about "teamwork." He emphasises the need to explicitly teach about content instrumentally through a movement context and the use of teacher questioning to highlight important learning he wants the students to notice.

I find some of the more enjoyable teaching occurs when you can say, well let's stop and you can watch these other groups here and you tell me which group's working the best? They say 'that one!' and you say, 'tell me what they're doing?' [And they say] 'oh, oh I don't know!' [I continue questioning them by asking] 'what are they doing?' They certainly agree that that's the best group but they struggle to say what it is that they're doing.

The teachers emphasise that the obvious and explicit teaching of interpersonal skills and teamwork is essential for the students to learn to live in any community.

So we've got to bring that explicit stuff out of what they're doing so they actually know what it is that they recognise, but they can't actually verbalise it very well. (Clint)

The teachers emphasised that socio-moral learning can be derived from a wide range of movement contexts. Clint thought of the underlying socio-moral outcomes, which can be learned by the students within movement contexts, as significant.

...so there's a whole series of things...in games and activities, that you can draw all this stuff [learning] out of... and get them to realise that ...what we're about, which is not so much the activity, but what's sitting underneath it...the concepts that underpin the activities. (Clint)

This opinion was further developed by Clint later in the interview.

This is what it's about at Riley High School... making sure that when they (the students) come in to [learn about] cooperation through cricket, that we are continually and explicitly [explaining]... that this is what we're looking at. [It] doesn't matter what sort of cricketer you are, although if you are a good cricketer there is a lot you can offer every time we have our little stations in groups. (Clint)

It is significant that the teachers are adamant that the explicit teaching of socio-moral learning and process outcomes (as opposed to performance outcomes) is significant in the development of positive class culture. As an example Clint discussed the use of

the game 'noodle tag' to teach about the social dimension of Hauora and how this contributes to team work and the success of games. He highlighted the questions he asks to get the students to reflect on their behaviour in the game and how this relates to their own and other students' Hauora.

...it's about also looking at not using sports but more physical activity and ...[minor games]. I think of noodle tag. One of my first sessions about wellbeing is around playing noodle tag and you can cover every one of the [Hauora] dimensions within a game of noodle tag. (Clint)

Clint uses questioning to promote reflection and to develop student understanding of not only the *NZC (2007)* but also Hauora.

They suddenly realise that there's more going on in this game than just tagging...you can pick on situations and you can see the kids you are left [with] at the end and you ask them [as a class] how they feel. 'Why do you run past someone to free someone else?' 'Oh he's a friend of mine.' 'So some people you will free up, and other people you will ignore?' So you can address those sorts of issues...

2a. Conversations and questioning

All of the teachers talked about the importance of having conversations with the students to promote learning from the social activities. This is evident from multiple quotes in the data and includes collective, small group and individual conversations. The conversations were seen as a teaching and learning activity.

The conversation I'd have with some of those other students is, 'OK, we have Jack who hasn't been involved. So how are we going to work towards including him? So what type of things would I see in the class to indicate that you have thought about this? So at the end of the class if I go and talk to Jack, what might he tell me about how he feels that lesson went?'...and just getting those students to think a bit more broadly. (Mia)

2b. Problem solving through group work as inquiry

In part one of the findings, physical education teachers establishing learning communities, problem solving and inquiry based learning tasks were presented as evidence of the establishment of learning communities in physical education. However it is also prudent to also include evidence of problem solving and inquiry in the socio-cultural and social learning pedagogies section, as these learning activities are significant pedagogical contributors to the development of a learning community.

All teachers identified the use of learning activities designed for students to work in groups, cooperatively, without a specific leader contributing to the development of the positive class culture. They used these activities for a range of reasons which included the learning of group-work skills, student empowerment, student engagement, motivation and students taking responsibility for their own learning. Linda discussed the use of cooperative activities in the development of self managing groups, where there is no obvious leader, allowing the students to problem solve and take responsibility for the success of the learning activities.

...lots of cooperative activities within the group, so where there's not necessarily a stronger person leading the others... they've gotta work that out for themselves so almost problem solving kind of stuff really. (Linda)

We do lots of group activity-based things where the students are given responsibility to solve a problem, [for example] to get the group up there and do a performance. (Clint)

So quite often I'll set up a lesson so that it falls down. I'll go in there and ... I hand it over and say "I'd like you to try something, do this, go for it" and don't give them too many instructions about it then that gives them the opportunity for things not to go right. We talk quite a bit about empowerment, allowing them to do things and then we de-brief. (Brad)

When asked about the teaching and learning activities in their physical education class the students discussed activities where the task or problem was defined by the teacher

and students' role is to solve the problem. It is acceptable to have multiple solutions to the problem.

Kelsey: We got to write our own dances and it was real good fun... 'cause it was really good, [what] everyone thought... we had done. He just gives us a topic ... we just choose how we want to [organise things],...we'd choose how we act and stuff like what kind of attributes we'd have with it.

Ellee: And he asks us if we're comfortable with it if we like the way that it's being played or something like that. If we want to change something on it or something like that

Tim: And it's...our responsibility to make it fun

The teachers all had a very clear idea of what they wanted the students to learn from their lessons. They appear to be flexible in their lesson delivery and able to adapt to the changing student learning needs. They used a range of learning strategies, methods and models which they adapted to suit the desired outcomes of each class, much of which was student problem solving.

Simple things like a mix of using things like TGFU¹ and experiential learning model and all of those sorts of things together. So like in touch [it] might be that you've taught them to or they know how to dump and pass. You say... let's imagine you've got three defenders there, how are you going to do this differently and then let's put in two defenders and work it out...so you're creating problems for them. (Linda)

Linda identified that she is flexible in her approach to learning activities and changed them based on the needs to the students.

You're creating situations for them that they have to work out for themselves ...you can stretch kids or support kids more depending on where they're where they're at. That's how I teach! (Linda)

¹ Teaching Games for Understanding is an approach allowing students to understand tactics of games through problem solving.

I think it's just like knowing where you want to go, where do I want to get these kids to today? Therefore what do I need to put in front of them and what do I need to ask them?...so you're making those [activities] up. Experiential learning, TGFU, questioning, divergent discovery, I mean, these sort of things combined. (Linda)

The models and methods described by Linda can be viewed as socio-cultural approaches to inquiry learning (McGee & Fraser, 2008; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005).

2c. The warm up as a leadership learning activity

It was surprise to find that all teachers interviewed identified the warm up as a learning activity for leadership, followship, teamwork and the development of positive class culture and cohesion. The warm up is perceived as a context for building class cohesion and an opportunity to empower students to take on a leadership role.

[The warm up is about] teaching the students how to be leaders ...so if you're going to run this activity and provide [leadership] information for all, it's not an exclusive club [as all the students] can do it...It also means that with structure students ...actually feel empowered to step up because there's no failure. (Mia)

I still value the warm-up we do. That's just establishing routines and patterns and getting everybody to be able to work together as a class to do the same activity from there. It's not the warm-up, but it's just doing a series of activities in unison, together, everyone focussed on doing the task and having someone step out and lead it. Initially I [lead it] but once I've shown them what to do, I hand that task right over [to the students]. You have to empower the students to take on board the roles rather than be the dictator. I think that's crucial. (Clint)

Part 4 Findings: Philosophy to practice

Part four of the findings will document the evidence relating to teacher and societal philosophies and how these entities influence teacher physical education practice. The following themes are identified.

- “We are about people.” Humanist philosophies in physical education.
- Physical Education as a contributor to community.
- Philosophical constructs hindering the development of a learning community.

1. “We are about people.” Humanist philosophies in physical education

Philosophy was viewed as an important construct informing their practice by all the teachers in the study. Linda states that her teaching decision making is informed by her philosophy.

I guess the other thing is you have to have a real commitment to your teaching. I mean let’s face it, you can stand in front of a class and have them jump through hoops for forty weeks a year if you choose to but if you’re there for the real potential and purpose of physical education and you’re passionate about that in terms of the ways in which it can develop those kids as people then you’ll teach differently but it takes time. (Linda)

All the teachers saw themselves as teachers of people not a subject or teachers of content, teaching holistically, developing understandings related to the wellbeing of student lives. As Clint stated:

We are about people, we want to develop the people and ...you take whatever you’re given and you try and build them and build them and build them and turn them out as better people. (Clint)

Linda and Brad concur, stressing the point that they are teachers of students and not just teachers of the physical education discipline.

One of the most important things is that I see myself as a teacher of students, not merely a teacher of a subject... I ... see them as people, developing them as the whole person. (Linda)

All the teachers are passionate about teaching physical education and believe that they teaching students' skills which will allow them to negotiate their future lives in a positive health enhancing manner.

It's about teaching the students not teaching the subject. It's more about life. (Brad)

Evidence suggests that these teachers are passionate and committed to teaching and learning in physical education and believe they make a difference to the students and the community.

Clint concurs with Linda and Brad and adds that the *HPE* (1999) is a document that contributes to his ideas about teaching students about wellbeing as well as contributing positively to their growth and development as people.

I would like to think that we as a school really offer something to the development of our kids. We're actually interested in them... We are about people, we want to develop the people... [as opposed to]... the content people, just to fill them up and regurgitate the content. (Clint)

He believes that he is preparing students for their futures including their role as a parent.

One of the things I tell them is that the most important job you're ever going to have when you leave here is [being] a parent. You do that job well and you'll create so many good things around you and possibly there are some things that you're going to have to put in place to do that. You're going to have to be a good learner. No one's going to teach you how to do this. (Clint)

2. Physical education as a contributor to community

Within the teachers' philosophies is the belief that quality physical education has a significant and positive impact on the individual, culture of the school and wider community which informs all of her curriculum decision making and implementation.

Because I believe in it absolutely...in terms of making a difference in kids' lives, [physical education]...potentially offers the biggest opportunities to do that in secondary school, undoubtedly. (Linda)

The other thing I still believe is that quality physical education or ...physical education well taught [has] a positive impact on the whole school culture. Because..., they're taking what they've learnt here and they're applying it [elsewhere in the school]. We're encouraging them too...we're explicitly making the links between what we do and the school mission and vision... I don't think anyone else makes those links for them in the school. That should be really valued. (Linda)

Mia believes that a sense of belonging to the wider community is a vision to strive for;

...they're developing a wider sense of where they're placed in the world in the wider community, not just themselves and in their class. Like, how can they as an individual contribute to the wider dynamic that's going on within the class, within the school, within the community?... It's about learning skills that are valuable in the real world not their world but the real world. (Mia)

Clint emphasises that the point that physical education in his classes is about the learning process associated with socio-moral outcomes; creating alternative definitions of success which are inclusive of all members of the learning community. He is explicit about the close relationship between the philosophies of the *NZC (2007)* and the school values, bringing the learning closer to the student's lives.

So I work on getting [the students] to understand is, how you do what you do, is equally important to us because that's actually what we're about. That's

actually a message we [send] when we equate the curriculum with the ‘school values.’ (Clint)

This is a significant example of the teachers’ understanding of the humanist philosophical understandings and their understanding of how important it is to develop definitions of success which are alternative to the performance outcomes view dominant in physical education.

3. Philosophical constructs hindering the development of a learning community

Developing students within a learning community is challenging and there are barriers which hinder this development. A lack of sympathy or understanding from colleagues about the goals and teaching and learning activities required for the development of a learning community was signalled as a barrier.

... if a head of department just says, ... it’s important that [the students] can kick and...pass and...you’re not teaching it! If that structure gets put on me then how I do things possibly has to change...before we talked about if the students are off site and the school policy says they’re not allowed to leave the school site, that’s a barrier because the students can’t take responsibility in that wider sense. (Mia)

... one year I was out on the field and [the students] were [learning about] touch and I was...lying on the field with sunhat on...someone came up and [said] ‘well don’t you have the easiest job in the world’ or ‘lucky for some’ and I’m like no it’s not lucky for some... This is the result of three terms of really focused and intense work on my part to be able to have this [class] running like this... It’s hard because people only see the outside, or they...go ‘she’s got those bloody kids outside again’ or ‘unsupervised.’ So they don’t understand or they don’t know that, actually they’re not unsupervised, that there are boundaries set... (Mia)

The problem that we face as physical educators...is that the information we're teaching [the students] about, class culture and [life skills], which is also within our curriculum area [is not valued] and until that's brought onto par and valued within schools, then unfortunately I think we might be the poor cousins...cause it's not seen as academic and that's where we have the problems with parents [not understanding what we do]. (Clint)

All the teachers felt that the limited time allocated to physical education was a significant barrier in the junior school, which directly hindered students' learning opportunities and development.

Time with the students creating a relationship. (Clint)

[Time]. Because you do have to create some kind of relationship with them, they do need to get to know you as a person or you know, have that opportunity. For some kids that takes longer than others. (Linda)

I find sometimes only having an hour [is problematic]...you try and build your class culture, your class contract over three different lessons, you're really getting into something and you're really going for it and the bell goes...that makes it a bit difficult. (Brad)

Summary

This chapter has documented the findings selected as evidence for use in the following discussion chapters. It has presented a number of themes and subthemes which related directly to the questions of this study. After a considerable process of analysis four main themes emerged from the data. The themes presented consist of evidence related to the establishment of learning communities, relations within a learning community, content and pedagogies taught, caught and facilitated and finally how individual and societal philosophies and discourses influence the development of learning communities in physical education.

Introduction of chapter five

Now that the foundations of the study has been established in previous chapters, the journey exploring the establishment of learning communities in physical education can begin to create meaning from the findings. As mentioned, the four parts to in this chapter relate to the chapters following. The first discussion chapter will explore the overarching question of the study; do physical education teachers establish classes as learning communities?

Chapter Five: Discussion on physical education teachers establishing learning communities

Introduction

Chapter five will document the findings and subsequent discussion of the evidence associated with the one of the significant questions of this study; *do physical education teachers establish classes as learning communities?* I argue that developing a class community is fundamental and foundational to students' ability to effectively contribute to a physical education learning community. This developmental process is dependent on the students' ability to learn to live within a community (Delores, et al., 1998). I will discuss the need for a re-conceptualisation of the reported learning community processes and discuss the need to consider the evolution of a learning community as a continuum. I argue that learning communities gradually evolve from a fledgling state to an established learning community. The themes highlighted in this chapter discuss definitions of learning communities and will draw on evidence that allows for a reconstruction of the salient activities and entities necessary for the development of a physical education learning community.

1. Physical education classes as learning communities: Activities and entities of a community

There are a variety of conceptualisations of a 'learning community'. Watkins' (2005) model of a learning community consists of the development of a foundational class culture known as the hallmarks and processes of a community, which precedes the development of a community of learners, which in turn precedes the creation of a learning community (as previously discussed in Chapter Two). This three stage scaffold is portrayed as logical and sequential scaffolding. This was the framework used to provide structure to this research project as its significant detail about learning communities is informative, detailed and relevant to secondary school physical education, which is not provided by other authors (Alton-Lee, 2003; Brophy, 2001; Brown, 1997; Pryor, 2004; Selby & Pike, 2000).

Watkins' three discrete stages are useful for the development of an initial understanding of a learning community. However, when reflecting on the evidence from this study, the growth of a learning community is a messy, complex process contrary to the impression Watkins (2005) conveys. On reflection I have found this sequential construction to be less than helpful, as it would appear from analysis of the evidence of the study and the literature, that the teachers facilitate the development of all learning community processes simultaneously.

Watkins' (2005) "community" structure has embedded within it artificial constructs which serve to complicate and create unnecessary barriers. As described in Chapter Two the characteristics and processes of a community are artificially separated into two parts which is unnecessarily simplistic and negates the complexity of a physical education learning community. A similar critique can be applied to Watkins' (2005) "processes of a community", as they are also outcomes of an altruistic class community developed through the activities and pedagogies discussed in Chapters Five and Six. These processes are the extension of the explicit development of values and norms associated with a learning community (Brown, 1997).

I believe that the following structure, synthesised from a number of authors, is well located to explain the processes of an altruistic physical education learning community.

1. The development of a class "discourse of community", which requires the following activities and entities:
 - a. Collective goals (Brown, 1997);
 - b. Altruistic class values (Brown, 1997; Pryor, 2004; Watkins, 2005);
 - c. Student understanding of rights and responsibilities for all students within the learning community (Hellison, 1994; Miller, et al., 1997);
 - d. Ways of discussing ideas, how people argue, discuss and resolve conflict (Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005);
 - e. Norms about behaviour: caring, sharing and inclusion (Alton-Lee, 2003; Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005);

2. The development of “learning community discourse” requires the following activities and entities:
 1. Inquiry/Knowledge generation (Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005);
 2. Reflection and Meta-Learning (Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005);

A discourse of community

I concur with Alton Lee (2003), Brophy (2001), and Watkins (2003), who state that positive peer and social interactions, otherwise understood as community, are fundamental to the evolution of a learning community. As a community and therefore a learning community is essentially altruistic in nature, the development of students’ socio-moral understandings and the associated authentic behaviours are a necessary pre-requisite for addressing the peer culture of a class. It is important to remember that the activities and entities associated with the evolution of a learning community are not hierarchical or sequential tasks; they are simultaneously developed by the teacher over a period of time.

Observational evidence confirms that the peer culture of 9PE is developed to the point where students’ feel like they belong, are included and contribute to a caring and supportive class environment.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Logan: | Everyone’s just way more kind |
| Alexius: | Yeah everyone...helps each other |
| Tim: | If one or two people know [what they’re doing], then they’ll try and explain it to the rest of the class that don’t know about it...say we’re playing a sport or something and someone’s...better at that sport or like plays it, they would try and encourage the other people who don’t know how to play |

The students state that they feel like they have a sense of belonging, an outcome from the processes of community in the physical education class.

- | | |
|--------|-------------------------|
| Logan: | Real cool. Comfortable. |
|--------|-------------------------|

- Kelsey: It would be the class that our class is closest in, in Physical Education
- Ellee It's because we're not just sitting at a desk, we're actually getting involved, and we're all getting up and [using] teamwork and stuff.

A discourse of community that conveys norms about values, ways of interacting with peers and how people exchange ideas, and actively supports all students learning has been established (Brown, 1997). It would appear that the students in Clint's (Mr E) class have caught and been taught the norms associated with a physical education community, as they appear to know how to support each other and how to engage in cooperative tasks. The students feel that their class has norms about values as a group which facilitates learning for all participants (Brown 1997). This raises the question of the transfer of norms and values to other classes and contexts around the school and community, which will be discussed towards the end of this discussion.

The teachers' evidence concurs with the students' as it suggests that students understand the altruistic class norms which facilitate students' contributions to others' learning along with the meaning associated with contributing and belonging to a community.

... the 1.1 assessments in Year Eleven, they talk about Hauora. We ask them to look at how they impact on others and some of what they write is just extraordinary! When you question them about it...they finally work out what they've done for somebody else and how meaningful it was. (Brad)

Student understanding of how to belong and contribute to a community highlights the socio-moral norms and values foundational to the meaning associated community. Communities by definition are not communities unless the members reason and act in altruistic ways (Miller, et al., 1997; D. Solomon, et al., 1996; G. Solomon, 2007).

2. Activities and entities contributing to a learning community discourse

It is logical and necessary that learning is the focus of a learning community and therefore learning processes are inherent to the idea of a learning community. Watkins (2005) and Brown (1997) have highly developed visions for learning in a learning community. Their vision is best encapsulated by the metaphor an orchestra. Together the individuals create something that is bigger than the sum of the parts, developing real skill in orchestrating both individual and group performance (Watkins, 2005). This conjures images of students setting individual and collective learning goals synchronised with student decision making about learning processes which results in students' experiencing, experimenting, investigating and accessing information from diverse sources to meet their goals (Alton-Lee, 2003; Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005). The student learning processes consist of inquiry, knowledge generation, meta-learning and reflection. The students will finally bringing their newly generated knowledge to the community to be shared with other learners, who will reciprocate. This vision is a finely tuned complex performance. Within my study there is no evidence to support this utopian view of a physical education learning community.

I dispute Watkins (2005) representation of a learning community as it is not the reality of practice. The learning community envisaged by Watkins (2005) is the Rolls Royce version, fully established in its entirety and I resist this idealistic and unrealistic representation. Evidence from this study suggests that a learning community evolves over a period of time or it could be described as a journey of becoming.

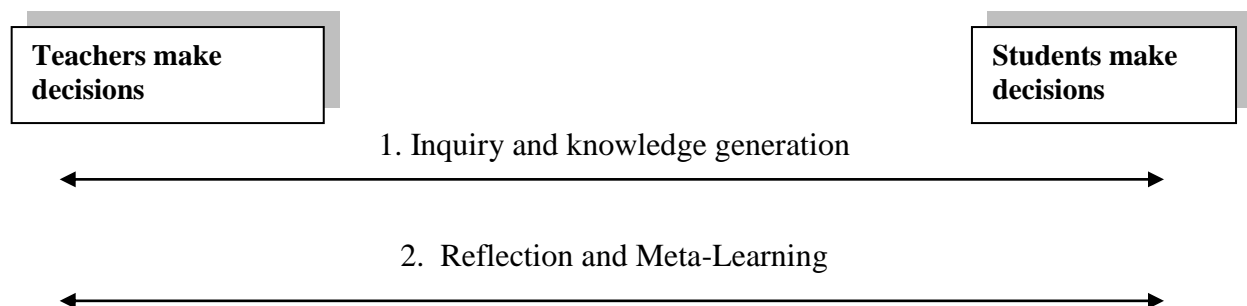
I believe that this study does provide evidence that physical education teachers do establish learning communities, as the activities and entities which contribute to the development of a learning community are evolutionary and are separately and dialectically positioned on a continuum. At one end of the continuum is the entity of teacher control and at the other is the entity of student autonomy. This relationship between the entities is inversely responsive to the learning needs of the students. When the teacher control has primacy, student agency is minimised and visa versa. How much autonomy students have depends on the willingness and ability of the

students to take responsibility for their learning and the teacher's willingness and ability to allow the students to take responsibility. This can otherwise be known as power sharing. An example of power sharing is provided by Linda.

We do lots of group activity-based things where the students are given responsibility to solve a problem.

The students have some autonomy, agency and the responsibility to solve the problem however the teacher design has some control over the activity. This continuum is similar to Mosston's spectrum of teaching styles (Mosston & Ashworth, 1986).

Teacher/student autonomy continuum (Fig1)



In a fledgling learning community, the role of the teacher is to facilitate students' understanding of the learning activities and entities while striving to move along the continuum to promote student agency. The teacher is initially responsible for the learning activities and entities of the community including the goals and selection of pedagogies to ensure the students have an opportunity to learn. For example:

...so there's a whole series of things...in games and activities, that you can draw all this stuff [learning] out of... and get them to realise that ...what we're about, which is not so much the activity, but what's sitting underneath it.
(Clint)

Clint discusses the use of instrumental pedagogical approaches allowing the students to learn from movement contexts. When this quote is carefully considered it becomes

apparent that the teacher is making decisions about the activities and the learning outcomes. The students do have some agency as often these activities are problem solving or experiential in nature and the students are required to “work it out for themselves” (Linda). For example:

‘We have Jack who hasn’t been involved. So how are we going to work towards including him? So what type of things would I see in the class to indicate that you have thought about this? So at the end of the class if I go and talk to Jack, what might he tell me about how he feels that lesson went?’...and just getting those students to think a bit more broadly. (Mia)

Mia’s questions give the students agency while simultaneously scaffolding the learning by promoting inquiry and knowledge generation through reflection. The inquiry and reflection are often promoted through teacher-led questioning, which is discussed further in Chapter Seven. Through the development of tasks that are problems to be solved and teacher questioning, students are participating and engaging in “fledgling” inquiry, knowledge generation, reflection and meta-learning activities in the class community, a community which learns together. As learning occurs, student agency will be gradually promoted and the students will have opportunity to develop as a learning community. How this occurs will be discussed in depth in Chapters Six and Seven.

I have identified evidence in this study which suggests that the learning processes of inquiry, knowledge generation, reflection and meta-learning can be teacher or student generated and that the teachers do establish their classes as physical education learning communities.

2a. Inquiry and generating knowledge

Inquiry approaches to learning invite communication and capture the key human processes such as interest and questioning, and support engagement between people which can enhance relationships in a learning community (Watkins, 2005). Inquiry learning also allows for the creation of links between “ideas and knowledge” (Watkins, 2005, p. 39). It is important to acknowledge that a learning community’s

product is knowledge, where knowledge is “contextually relevant new meaning created by the students, requiring students to convey what they know as a way of demonstrating their understanding” (Watkins, 2005, p. 37)

As previously mentioned, inquiry can include experimentation, first hand experience and investigation (Watkins, 2005), where the students are engaged in instrumental participatory pedagogies and inquiry within movement contexts. The teachers in this study design learning activities which use experimentation and first hand experience to investigate the socio-moral learning domain. For example:

I'll set up a [activity] so it falls down. I hand it over and say 'I'd like you to try something... go for it' and don't give them too many instructions about it, then that gives them the opportunity for things not to go right. (Brad)

In this instance the teacher provides the learning framework within a movement context and through questioning and reflection promotes inquiry. The students' inquire into their individual and collective values and behaviours through first hand experience and experimentation. Inquiry learning structures have a dialectical relationship with student agency with each entity responsive to the other. As previously stated, in a fledgling learning community reflection and problem solving is initially promoted by teacher questioning, and as student agency is promoted more responsibility for this activity is shared with the students.

Inquiry is also dialectically related to individual and collective knowledge generation and is essential learning entities within a learning community. Due to the dialectical relationship between the entities from this point forward these entities will be written as inquiry/knowledge generation. Generating knowledge in a learning community is a socio-cultural constructivist activity and students' solve problems through collective processes creating contextually relevant new meanings together (Brown, 1997; Rogoff, 2003; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005, p. 39). Knowledge generation in physical education includes students' problem solving tasks together. Evidence from this study suggests that students do have the opportunity to generate knowledge with others.

...using a mix of things like TGFU and experiential learning model. So like in touch [it] might be that you've taught them to or they know how to dump and pass. You say... 'let's imagine you've got three defenders there, how are you going to work this out?' (Linda)

In this example of inquiry/knowledge generation, the teacher problematises the learning situation and it is the role of the students to inquire, and solve problems, generating individual and collective knowledge about the tactics of touch. In a physical education learning community, knowledge building is the principle activity, encompassing the grasping of what others have already understood, and sustained and collective effort to extend the boundaries of what is known (Watkins, 2005). In this study it appears that knowledge is generated through the teachers defining the problems to be solved and students inquiring and solving the problems. Evidence suggests that the inquiry/ knowledge generation entities can be and are exclusive of students accessing sources of knowledge developed by others outside of the community. This could be viewed as "fledgling" student inquiry/knowledge generation or alternatively this becomes a limitation of the inquiry/knowledge generation entity, which may be viewed as an opportunity for future development by the teachers. When fledgling inquiry/knowledge generation from this study is related to the learning community continuum, the teachers are facilitating the inquiry thus maintaining some control and power. Student agency is promoted by the teacher, but the students are generating knowledge. An oppositional perspective is that the teachers are maintaining some agency which could be shared with the students. The judgements, concerning which participants in the learning community have the power to make decisions, are reliant on a multitude of activities and entities depending on outcomes desired by the teacher.

2b. Reflection and meta-learning

The learning process of meta-learning is developed through student reflection on inquiry/knowledge generation learning processes. Meta-learning is enhanced greatly by the process of reflection and through this process a learning community learns from its own experiences of inquiry and knowledge generation (Watkins, 2005). In a learning community there will be collective reflection, which is not a substitute for

individual reflection but grows from and enhances it (Brown, 1997; Claxton, 2008; Watkins, 2005). Meta-learning encompasses student's understandings of individual and collective learning goals, strategies, feelings, effects and contexts for learning (Watkins, 2005) and is dialectically related to reflection, essential for knowledge transfer to other contexts (Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005).

In this study teacher discussion provides evidence of teacher directed reflection and meta-learning. Linda's testimony provides evidence of the use of reflection to promote curriculum goals alongside developing students' understanding of their own learning.

That might be in conversation or through de-brief ...[Reflection is] ...a way to get them [to] understand what they've learnt and how they've learnt it, to consider why it might be important to them personally (Linda)

This quote suggests that Linda defines the boundaries and guides the student reflection but the students are not told what to think. When relating this to the learning community continuum, there is significant teacher control however there is also evidence of some student agency.

The teachers in this study state that individual and collective reflection is an inherent and essential component for meta-learning explicitly taught within the experiential learning cycle. Reflection is seen as the linking process between experience, experiments, investigations and action and thought (Beard & Wilson, 2002). When the learning process is reflected on, meta-learning can occur. For example:

When we use [experiential learning] we're not just running them through the cycle, we're saying [to the students]... these are the steps that we can put in place to improve what we're doing...you can do this, you can work out what happened, why it happened, what's the meaning of that and what do you do now and let's have another crack at it. (Brad)

Teacher discussion indicates that "students are actually learning [reflection and meta-learning] processes and applying them" and that the students would "definitely

recognise a requirement that they would need to reflect on something that they've just done, question it, and look for improvements" (Brad). Through the use of reflection as a component of the experiential learning process, the teachers are promoting opportunities for students to develop meta-learning skills. Evidence in this study suggests that the teachers do promote a reflection and meta-learning through teacher questioning, conversations and reflections with individuals and the class as a collective (Claxton, 2008; Watkins, 2005).

2c. Negotiated and co-constructed curriculum

Evidence of co-construction of curriculum learning goals as a form of inquiry/knowledge generation is limited in this study. Linda envisages that students would lead their own learning in a learning community and when questioned further, had co-constructed learning by asking students "what tasks do you want to do to meet this [achievement] standard?", giving students choice and responsibility. Through the implementation of Hellison's TPSR Model, Mia negotiates and co-constructs learning goals with students as she deems appropriate. Students earn the right to negotiated and co-constructed curriculum through taking responsibility for their own learning.

We're going to build a physical education programme...through which there will be some more structured time, and in which there will be completely unstructured time that's negotiable... Unstructured means student decided time...it has to...have a purpose, a meaning and...they have to be responsible for doing the paper work. (Mia)

This democratic process describes how the teacher and students work collectively, implying that the students take responsibility for developing their learning goals by engaging in a process of inquiry/knowledge generation. This also suggests that the students are accessing information from sources outside of the class to develop a learning programme using the inquiry learning processes; however no evidence has been found to substantiate this assumption. Watkins (2005) states that when co - construction of learning occurs the class acts as a learning community and learning tasks create knowledge as well as developing criteria and competencies for evaluating

knowledge. The class works cooperatively to contribute to the knowledge {Watkins, 2005 #61}. In this case co-construction of curriculum may have occurred without students engaging in inquiry or knowledge generation, as the learning outcomes depend on the positioning of the decision making responsibilities on the learning continuum or more specifically the responsibility the students assume on the inquiry/knowledge generation continuum. However it is worth considering that the students may have assumed responsibility for leadership and therefore through teacher guidance they have opportunities to generate new knowledge of the socio-moral domain from within the resources of the class, from activities worthy of experience, experimentation and investigation. This positioning indicates that a negotiated curriculum and possibly fledgling co-construction of curriculum, without students investigating and accessing of resources from outside of the class community can occur within a learning community.

2d. Transfer of knowledge to other contexts as a characteristic of a learning community.

Meta-learning according to Watkins (2005) is essential for transfer of knowledge generated to other communities and contexts (Watkins, 2005), the ultimate goal of learning in a learning community. This is otherwise known as “procedural knowledge”, memory related to knowing how and leading to action (Biggs & Moore, 1993). Learners who have the ability to transfer knowledge to other contexts implying that procedural learning has occurred and the students in this study provided confirmation that their learning was procedural, and did transfer learning to other contexts.

Stephen: I use [it] sometimes when I’m playing soccer, I yell encouragement to the others, lots...and then [when] you start doing...it gets easier

Tim: Like weekend sports teams when sometimes there’s a team of thirteen and ten people are like real good and like three other people aren’t. [I] just give them encouragement

Alexius: I find I use it a lot with my swimming coach ‘cause like me and him don’t see eye to eye on things. The kind of stuff Mr E does has been to talk and communicate with people and I felt like, with

my coach, it's been really good, 'cause, when he would get quite angry at me now I know how to talk to him and I'd tell him how I felt and it would just sort it out kind of thing.

Summary

It is intended that this chapter answer an over arching question of this study, *do physical education teachers establish classes as learning communities?* Initially it was necessary to explore the constructs contributing to community and learning communities, to provide a holistic understanding of the evidence of the themes drawn from the data. As previously stated, learning within a learning community needs to be seen “as essentially an enterprise of inquiry that is dialogically co-constructed by the teacher and students together” (Sewell, 2006, p. 5). Evidence suggests that the teachers in this study do construct an enterprise of inquiry through dialogue with the students, and do engage in reflection and meta-learning processes which can lead to transfer of learning. An enterprise of inquiry is not a stand alone entity as it is dialogically and dialectically related to other learning community processes, in particular those activities and entities influencing student and teacher agency. In a fledgling learning community the teacher promotes student agency and learning through dialogue (often in the form of questioning), inquiry based task design, facilitation of student generation of knowledge, reflection and meta-learning. This climate encourages individual and collective cognitive dissonance facilitating meta-learning and transfer of procedural knowledge to other contexts. This evidence confirms that the teachers in this study do establish their classes as fledgling learning communities and move fluidly along the learning community continuum towards maturity.

Introduction to chapter six: Relationships as foundations to physical education learning communities

The following chapters will explore how the teachers in this study construct classes as a community. As discussed briefly in this chapter, the development of a class as a community is foundational to the development of a learning community. It is pre-requisite that classes develop a collective knowledge about the altruistic nature of a community and that students' act in ways coherent with this knowledge, as this is

pivotal to students' understanding of how to live within a learning community (Delores, et al., 1998). Chapter six explores the nature of the relationships which support the development of a class community and ultimately a learning community,

Chapter Six: Discussion on relationships as the foundation of a learning community:

Introduction

Building on the understandings of a learning community developed in Chapter Five, this chapter will explore the evidence associated with “how” teachers develop learning communities through relationship building, thus addressing a major question of this study. Three major themes have been identified as central to the development of a discourse of community and will be discussed. The first theme is related to the initiation of the teacher student relationship which is based around an ethic of care and is the initial impetus contributing to the development of positive peer relationships and a learning community. The second theme is the nature of the discourse of community developed by teachers, valuing each member of the class regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexuality and dis/ability thus promoting altruistic peer relations. The third theme explores the role the teacher plays in learning tasks which contribute to the intricate web of relations pivotal to the development of community. The complex nature of community is not easily conveyed in a linear fashion, however it suffices to say that these activities are dialectal in nature as each contributes to the other while being an identifiable in its own right. This discussion in this chapter will provide evidence of how the teachers develop constructive relationships promoting altruistic community relationships.

1. Relationships as the foundations of a learning community

1a. Building relationships

“Student teacher relationships are widely recognised as being important to student motivation, intellectual development and general achievement as well as to the overall supportive, safe class environment which encourages learning” (Aultman, et al., 2009, p. 636). The development of positive student teacher relationships can facilitate opportunities for meaningful student teacher conversations which enhance individual learning and ultimately the creation of a community. (Aultman, et al., 2009). Taking a personal interest in students’ lives allows for the building of a personal yet

professional relationship, through which teachers can find ways to bring students into the important learning conversations and also demonstrate an ethic of care (Claxton, 2008; Noddings, 1995, 2001). The initial personal conversations provide a springboard which allows teachers to have learning conversations with students, eventually enhancing student achievement (Noddings, 1995, 2001).

The teachers in this study have multiple ways of mediating peer culture and developing positive student teacher relationships. Mia begins her year with a Mihi providing opportunities for students initiate conversations and to build personal relationships.

There's always something they can relate to [in my mihi] and I try to be quite clinical in the focus I have, I've sort of got something that hopefully everyone can relate to [which] hopefully provides that hook in for students. (Mia)

Mia explicitly plans to create associations between herself and her students' lives which may foster opportunities for conversations. It appears that initial conversations are the major tools for developing personal student teacher rapport.

All the teachers use common points of interest to develop relationships as well as conversing with the students about their lives outside of school. Linda views the development of a personal relationship as a way of expanding the students' undesirable stereotypical views of teachers which contribute to the hierarchical power relations inherent in most institutional education.

I will always make a point of trying to make individual contact with as many kids as I can, either when they're lining up coming in, during the lesson, on their way out...that's about connecting with them as people and not me, teacher; you, [the] student... as a person.. (Linda)

Power sharing and reciprocity are the prerequisites for the promotion of student agency which is pre-requisite to the construction of a learning community. (Alton-Lee, 2003; Rogers, 1983; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005). This suggests that some deconstruction of the nature of the student teacher power relations is desirable. The

physical education teachers interviewed indicate that they use valuable skills to initiate and develop positive relationships, however students are not passive in this role and also initiate the relationships with the teachers. In this instance sport is used as a vehicle to initiate and develop a relationship which is reciprocated by the teacher. Clint observes:

...a number of boys come up to me... they want me to know what they're good at physically. I also think [that] some of those people really want to show you that it's the one thing they're good at and that's their self esteem.
(Clint)

Relationship building is an activity which contributes to the humanising of the teacher and portrays a transparent realness about them which could be described as sincerity, genuineness and an ethic of care (Rogers, 1983). Teachers who sincerely value, trust, and have respect for the learner demonstrate this through well developed intra and interpersonal skills which contribute to positive student teacher relations and an enhanced learning climate (Alton-Lee, 2003; Noddings, 1995, 2001; Rogers, 1983; Watkins, 2005). From observations and interviews it would seem that the teachers in this study do have well developed interpersonal skills allowing them to develop students' respect and trust. They valued the personal relationship they developed with their students as it did allow them to have conversations which enhance students learning.

...using it as learning tool and so you have a relationship with those kids and you can sort of build into that in different way (Clint)

1b. Trust in student teacher relationships

The development of a mature student teacher relationship is based on mutual respect and an ethic of care and trust which is reciprocated between students and teachers. The student is "trusted to develop" (Rogers, 1983, p. 133) by the teacher and the teachers are trusted to facilitate learning. Brad represented all the teachers' views about care for the students in his statement:

... [Students] just want to know that you care... You let them know that you do [care], then they just [think] “ok that’s good. I know he cares I don’t want [the attention] now.” (Brad)

Evidence from the teachers suggests that a relationship based on care, trust and reciprocity contributes to the positive class culture otherwise described as community.

...[the thing] which [enables]...a positive culture within the class is that trust in me. There has to be that relationship develop, and it has to develop at a personal level, not just me being personal with them but the students being personal with me... the students feel valued, they feel a connection. (Mia)

The teachers demonstrated an ethic of care through characteristic forms of attention such as showing students how to do a skill, the honouring of requests, giving and receiving compliments, confronting students, showing concern for student health and wellbeing (Larson, 2006). The teachers in this study promote a discourse of care and use multiple ways to communicate an ethic of care. This includes activities such as individual and collective conversations with students around every-day events which also explicitly highlight expectations of students to demonstrate an ethic of care in their peer relationships. For example:

I think role modelling conflict situations, role modelling good manners [is important]. [For example] the runner coming in the door, saying hello to the runner... They come in and they feel awkward and they walk out the door and you say [to the senior class], ‘why do they feel awkward? What can we do to make them feel less awkward?’ So I think the role modelling of those ...conflict situations when you don’t get upset and angry...[is important for learning] (Clint)

1c. Managing student behaviour as an ethic of care

The teachers in this study subscribe to a humanist philosophy of promoting freedom and equity (see Chapter Seven for further discussion). That is, students’ understanding of rights and responsibilities as balanced against the ideals of freedom and equity (T. Davies, 2008). With the right to freedom and equity comes the

responsibility to contribute to others freedom and equity (T. Davies, 2008). This humanist philosophy about learning in a physical education context has subtle implications for how the teachers “manage” the students’ behaviour. Authentic coherence with a humanist philosophy implies that teachers believe that students can change their behaviour impacting on others freedom and equity, through development of understandings about the nature of community relations. In this context “managing” student behaviour therefore becomes a learning opportunity as opposed to a process of developing compliant students and is viewed as an ethic of care. The students in the study recognised and valued the ethic of care even when it meant that the purpose of the conversations was about inappropriate behaviour and there were, at times, teacher imposed consequences.

Ellee: He teaches you, he tries to get you to learn, not just “oh you’re getting referred. He tries to teach you something... not just take the easy way out.

Alexius: Like about life and stuff. He makes us learn from our mistakes ...

Tim: He tries to correct you. Some teachers...if you’re being naughty in class they’ll just refer you and then they don’t realise that...it’s not really correcting you, it’s just like sending you to a room and pretty much giving you a free period.”

Kelsey: “...once he referred me, and I came to come back here at the end of the period and he... talked with me...[about how my behaviour] could keep me [from getting a job] ... when I’m older... It shows that he cares, you know”

The teachers discussed how building positive student teacher and peer relationships through an ethic of care often led to student compliance. The evidence identified in this study would suggest that it is important to develop a class culture based on an ethic of care, that is, based around students’ understanding of how the right to freedom and equity is inextricably linked to their personal responsibility to contribute to freedom and equity of others and further, how this contributes to communities within and outside of the school. Brad reported on the discussion amongst the staff about the tensions surrounding managing student behaviour.

... in the past we've had a number of discussions around the certain ways that we want [the students] to behave so...they work well in their groups... Do we want them to do that so that the class runs better and the job's easier for us and we use it as a classroom management tool or [is it so the students have] an understanding of why it it's important, where it's getting them and why they're important skills for them to take on for themselves and to take on into the future. (Brad)

The theme associated with student responsibility is articulated in school wide values which are explicit about student behaviour. Brad had some concerns about the school's understanding about why and how the values were used.

We sometimes feel that the school 'values' are a set of things that are bought down on top of the kids like a template for them to fit in to. Sometimes we feel that it's not necessarily about educating the students to become better people, but it's a way of managing the kids. If everyone does this then we have a nice school... We want them to have a whole lot of understanding and learning behind [the values] that so that they can then take that into another context. (Brad)

Brad is concerned with the schools' values being used as a means to developing students' compliance for ease of teaching, conflicting with his beliefs about students learning to live within a community (Delores, et al., 1998). There is a case here to consider whose values are being promoted, how was it decided whose values have precedence and why. When considering the evidence, it would seem that the values referred to are those that are known as universal values or ethics, which are understood by some authors as ethics that are universal across all cultures (Arnold, 1979). I believe that further exploration of the teachers' and schools' underpinning values could be a useful topic for exploration in further studies.

Evidence in this study suggests that there is an intricate tension between managing student behaviour for compliance and teaching students about values, rights and responsibilities. Socio-moral learning allows students the opportunity to learn about

choices and factors which influence self, others and society through developing an understanding of the need for mutual care and responsibility to achieve personal, societal and environmental wellbeing (Ministry of Education, 1999). In spite of the teachers striving to develop relationships based on student agency and rights and responsibilities, the management of students' behaviour is necessarily based on institutional and value laden hegemonic relations, as teachers are required to take responsibility for students' social, emotional, spiritual and physical safety and ensuring equitable access to learning opportunities for all.

It is important to remember that although an ethic of care can contribute to reciprocal "synergistic power" relationships between the teachers and students, it is a relationship that is difficult for teachers to maintain. The student teacher relationship inescapably means a relationship that is continually developing, negotiating and maintaining a social connection, as inevitably there will be tensions, conflict and issues of power and control balanced within the caring relationship (Aultman, et al., 2009). I therefore argue that in an established learning community in a secondary school context, management of student behaviour must ultimately be the responsibility of the teacher. This management and control of students' behaviour is necessary as learning about relationships and learning to live within a community is a life-long process and secondary school students are just beginning this learning journey, requiring guidance along the way. Teachers continually balance the promotion of student agency necessary for the use of socio-cultural and inquiry pedagogies to engage students in learning, against the need to provide a safe and orderly environment for all students. This is difficult when student behaviour is not always appropriate. Thus the student teacher relationship is fraught with difficulty, as it is necessarily a hegemonic one which can work against the promotion of student agency.

However, as previously mentioned, it would seem that the students interviewed in this study view the management of their behaviour as an ethic of care which is accepted and appreciated. For the teachers in this study, the ethic of care is demonstrated through the nature of the student teacher relationship and students' learning about the values associated with their rights and responsibilities, contributing to the positive

relationships prerequisite to living in a socially just community. The community is initially the physical education class and extends to the school and beyond. Evidence suggests that it is possible for teachers to walk the student rights versus responsibility tight-rope while acknowledging it is a tricky balancing act within a learning community based on a strong student teacher professional yet personal relationship.

1d. Humour as an ethic of caring

As previously discussed in Chapter Two, humour is a useful tool for teachers developing positive student teacher relationships. Humour portrays an ethic of care through building rapport and encouraging students to engage in the learning process (Aultman, et al., 2009). Teacher humour, especially when directed at self, is also a useful tool for conveying the message to the students that “we’re all in this together”, a useful message for a learning community. Teachers who laugh at themselves and laugh with their students effectively generate a “humour licence” giving the students the right to laugh at themselves and laugh together, developing an enjoyable class atmosphere (Pollak & Freda, 1997). This atmosphere promotes student to student and student teacher rapport, a sense of belonging, a possible decrease in student and teacher anxiety and conveys essential messages to students about taking learning risks which contribute to learning. Humour is another way an ethic of care is communicated to the students.

The students and teachers in this study identified humour as a significant tool for relationship building and to facilitate learning. There was significant discussion about the role of humour in the interviews. For example;

I tease the girls and I put myself down a lot. I also talk myself up...I’ll call myself the superstar as well. I’ll say, right everyone gets a chance to have a superstar but just for one game, once you’ve had me on your side for more than one game your team would win too many times so you get to pick me for just one” and those sorts of things. (Brad)

Evidence suggests that the use of humour contributes to the development of a relaxed, genuine and sincere student teacher relationship and this is a significant aspect to the

(student teacher) relationship, which can then be used as a springboard into conversations for learning.

The students commented about the use of humour by Clint which contributed to with the students' enjoyment of learning in physical education.

Logan: He uses humour so he makes you feel like the classes are really good fun.

Alexius: Mr E also kind of teaches us life skills as well. He's real good. It's not just all fun with him, but it is fun if you know what I mean.

Tim: He just... makes us laugh.

Alexius: Instead of being like "neughneughneughneugh" he just will...make fun of them. Not in a bad way! ...just so they know that they're that what they're doing is silly or something ...[or] he'll be like "oh the referral book's here, come and write yourself a referral" so you know you're... in the wrong.

Ellee: ...he's easy to get along with because you can relate to that kind of [humour].

Not only do the students comment on how Clint's sense of humour contributes to an easy relationship with the students, they also believe that the rapport developed through humour promotes cooperation, compliance and learning.

It is important to be thoughtful about teasing as a form of humour as it may be problematic for some students and others thrive on it. Humour is relativist in that one person's humour can be viewed by another as a put down or can find it intimidating. All students reported that they enjoyed Mr E's humour however it is relevant to consider that these students are not representative of the class and therefore it is not possible to generalise this evidence to other members of the class.

2. Addressing diversity and sense of belonging as an ethic of care building class relationships

The second theme of the chapter is an exploration of an ethic of care in relation to the diverse nature of the class. The dual dimensions of care and valuing diversity are core features of a learning community, however caring practices alone are insufficient to create an environment that supports the learning of diverse students. Diversity in physical education is characterised by ethnicity, social class, gender, and the physical education context also has the added complexity of physical dis/ability. Many students bring with them movement skills that are different from those valued by others, creating tensions and barriers to student engagement. The diverse nature of classes is often perceived as a threat by both teachers and students (Watkins, 2005) and can be hazardous to the development of a cohesive community. Student learning in physical education, by necessity, is cooperative, social and interactive in nature due to the learning contexts and therefore the development of students' socio-moral understandings in relation to diversity is essential to the establishment of a learning community.

Activities explicitly addressing diversity, is key to the development of a discourse of community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005). In this study, the diversity of the class is explicitly taught about, as teachers strive to develop a socially just community coherent with the teacher and class values (Alton Lee 2003). The teachers strive to develop productive physical education classes that have an ethic of care that pervades all class interactions and transcends or addresses the diversity of the class (Alton-Lee, 2003). Coherent with their promotion of student understanding about rights and responsibilities, teachers have conversations with the students highlighting the inclusion of all in activities.

...[this level is] not just about you, it's not just about you meeting your needs which is running the group, you've actually got to...care for others...within the class and that includes people who are not like you. Have you organised activities that...can everyone be included, are there any particular things that you need to think about?

The teachers identified that isolated groups of students present problems to both teachers and students as it impacts on the classes' ability to work as a learning community. It is significant that the teachers in this study were concerned with the diverse ethnicities in their classes who are at times isolated, and how this impacts on the community. As Clint stated,

...sometimes a conflict within the class [occurs] because...you've got too many overseas students and they become a nucleus and they don't interact. That could create some bad dynamics within the class. (Clint).

This quote suggests that the student's lack of interaction is perceived as a problem or threat to the cohesive class community. Watkin's (2005) suggests that there are a number of factors that could contribute to the self or forced exclusion of groups due to ethnicity. Students' views of others can be biased by hegemonic societal stereotypes derived from lack of knowledge and understanding about different others (Watkins 2005). This is at odds with the development of a "community", which embraces student diversity as strength, giving the class a richness and complexity of thinking which is advantageous to all learners (Brown 1997).

2a. Teachers use class sessions to value diversity and to establish community

Evidence in this study suggests that embracing diversity can decrease stereotypical thinking through enhanced opportunities for understanding and therefore foster inclusive community relations. The evidence to follow suggests that the teachers explicitly create opportunities for students to develop a keener sense of difference and differentiated understandings to build community, and which ultimately contribute to opportunities to form relationships based on understanding and a unified diversity (Alton-Lee, 2003; Watkins, 2005).

...if I've got a lot of overseas students in the class I'll do a little activity with assigning the gym as the world and going and standing on the place where you were born and just getting them to understand that, gosh look, we've got all these twelve people that have come to New Zealand since they were born and what must that have been like for them...just setting up little activities where they just have conversations about that thing sort of early on. (Linda)

A study completed by Alton-Lee, Diggins, Klenner, Vine and Dalton (2001), stated that skilful teachers facilitate positive interactions between the diverse individuals in a class. As previously mentioned the teachers in this study are skilful at initiating opportunities for relationship building. In this instance Linda has extended this talent to creating scaffolding for students to initiate conversations with diverse others in a structured manner, thus contribute to peer relationship development (Alton-Lee, Diggins, Klenner, Vine, & Dalton, 2001). These initial conversations with “others not like me” may provide a springboard for the students to develop altruistic peer relations with diverse others. Positive peer relations are essential for the development of an altruistic community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Aultman, et al., 2009; Brown, 1997; Sewell, 2006).

In a learning community diversity becomes strength through empowering students by providing them with the knowledge, skill and explicit support to negotiate the hegemonic relationships of difference. This can allow students to feel valued and to access to equitable learning opportunities. In this study, the teachers’ individual and collective conversations with students conveyed a discourse of community through promoting the message that “knowledge of others is to understand.”

The more people we meet and the more we get to know each other within the class, the richer we all will be both as a class and as individuals. (Linda)

It is significant that Linda used the word “we” as Linda strives to become the representation of “we” in her classes. This indicates “that ‘we’ is inclusive of those of us who are Māori, Pakeha, Tokelauan, Tongan, Japanese, Dutch, Cantonese, Somali, or have multiple ethnic heritages – or whatever ethnicity and ethnic heritages are part of her particular class community” (Alton-Lee, 2003, p. 31). How the “we” is represented is crucial to the development of relations within a community.

A teacher representing the “we” of the class is an interesting concept which can be viewed as problematic and questions must be asked about the credibility of such a claim. Is it realistic that one (possibly white, middle class, physically able) individual

can represent the diversity of a physical education community without reinforcing hegemonic social relations? Is it the role of the teacher to represent each of the diverse people's within the class and is this vision the best way to create a socially just community? Further discussion is needed around this point as I believe that the teacher representing "we" or the diversity of the class could be another form of marginalisation and promote hegemonic social relations. It is important to recognise the tensions inherent in a community of diverse people's when teachers are striving to develop learning communities which are inclusive and socially just.

This study was unable to determine conclusively, how the "we" was represented in the teachers classes as it is not possible to generalise from this evidence due to the small numbers interviewed. The use of "we" might mean people like "me" (white middle class) which ultimately creates environments that are divisive and support racism and abuse (Alton-Lee, et al., 1999). The tradition of 'us' and 'othering' can be signalled through exclusive, albeit unconscious language use (Johnstone, 1987) providing "a foundation for bullying, name-calling, racism, and practices that lead to patterns of social and academic exclusion" (Alton-Lee, 2003, p. 31).

Evidence in this study suggests that the teachers appear to have a key role in "representing class community with the students in ways that do not exclude by ethnicity, gender, dis/ability, social class background or sexuality" (Alton-Lee, 2003p30). To ensure that the "we" is inclusive, Linda believes that it is important to seek to develop students' understanding of the rich diversity of their classes.

...it's probably better to actually be really up front about the [diversity of our classes]. Identifying the fact that we've got...these six people here while you might think they're Asians, they're Asian New Zealanders... then linking that in with discrimination and how we might judge people because of where they're from or what they've done or what they can't do and things like that. (Linda)

A psychological sense of belonging is a significant ethic of care which builds students sense of a diverse community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Watkins, 2005). The teachers in this

study have a range of strategies for the valuing of diversity and the promotion of a sense of belonging contributing to a sense of class identity. Commonly the teachers used minor games and Te Reo Kori as contexts to provide opportunities to value the diverse cultures represented within their class.

...Like today we were doing Te Reo Kori but there was no Maori students in the class, there was Tongan, Kazakhstan, a few Samoan boys, an Indian girl, there was a really neat diverse mix...we were ...looking at movement and timing and we had the rako and we were doing sort of just basic stick games ...one of the boys...was banging [the rako] on the floor...I found out that they were drumming and so the Samoan boys decided that they would like to teach that timing to the class. (Mia)

The creation of student led teaching of activities from diverse cultures can occur through the teacher creating space for students to contribute..., “so that they get a sense really early on that they matter as an individual ...” (Linda). Evidence suggests that the students may feel they have agency and a sense of belonging as they were willing to step up and lead. This discourse sends important messages to the collective valuing of all members of the community, essential to the building of “we” in a learning community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Watkins, 2005).

Although the students interviewed in the study were not able to articulate what contributed to the inclusion of diverse students in their class, they observed that the Korean students were integrated and valued members of the class by the end of the year.

Alexius: Even the Koreans are getting involved now.

Kelsey: In fact, at the start of the year they used to speak in their little group, but now they’re all...getting into separate groups and ...getting involved.

Tim: ‘Cause at the start of the year they didn’t really...know who people were but...in PE you sort of see what people are sort of like

Alexius: Physical education brings out their personality.

This student and observational evidence gathered in this study suggests that the activities employed by the teachers do develop inclusive peer and community relationships.

3. The participant roles in a community.

The third theme of the chapter discusses the roles and tasks undertaken by the teachers, central to the construction of the community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Brown, 1997; Noddings, 1995; Watkins, 2005). Evidence from the study suggests that transparent and genuine relationships are formed with students and through this relationship teachers are able facilitate the development of the community. Teacher decisions about pedagogies are dialectically related to positive peer relationships, student agency and more explicitly the role of the students.

In a learning community teachers promote the role of the student as being one of responsibility and agency through the transfer of selective decision making responsibilities to the students. The students have a role to take on the responsibility to develop altruistic peer relationships.

...[it is your responsibility] to empower someone to lead, [and your responsibility to] follow them, ...so that everyone can function. (Clint)

....[I want the students] taking responsibility for themselves and engaging others, bringing others into the activities who are stand-offish, including them and being the person who makes a positive difference [I say to them].... that you need to be someone who encourages other peoples' participation, not squashes their participation. (Clint)

Evidence suggests that the teachers promote student engagement with understandings of peer relationships, and rights and responsibilities, as these entities and activities are the precursors for the successful use of participatory, socio-cultural pedagogies, which are in turn central to student's ability to participate in inquiry and meta-learning

processes (Alton-Lee, 2003; Martinek, et al., 2006; Miller, et al., 1997; Watkins, 2005).

It is noteworthy that teachers explicitly promote students understanding of their role in the learning community through understanding their own and others “rights and responsibilities” and “an ethic of care”, which are the essential foundations for the development of positive peer relationships and student agency. All of these activities and entities synthesise to contribute to a discourse of community, which surrounds the students seeking to influence student understandings about how to live within a community (Brown, 1997; Delores, et al., 1998).

3a. Teachers as facilitators

All the teachers in the study viewed their role in the learning community as a facilitator. Facilitation is described by Bentley (1994), Rogers (1983) and Reeves (2006) as empowering people to take control and responsibility for their own efforts and nurturing (rather than neglect and frustrate) students’ psychological needs, personal interests, and integrated values and is part of humanistic discourse promoted by the teachers. For example:

After a period of time I would hope that they see me as someone who has to step up when I need to take control of it but who would prefer to stand back and let them take ownership of it once they’ve got enough knowledge or content. (Clint)

Teachers as facilitators are sensitive to the learning needs of the students and peer relationships while concurrently keeping the intended learning outcomes to the forefront. Facilitators design and manage learning activities across all three learning domains (Alton-Lee, 2003) promoting positive community relationships. A facilitator’s goal is give meaning to class activities while simultaneously developing a class culture which inspires and motivates learners to engage with the goals of the community. Facilitating learning in this manner is not possible unless authentic student teacher relationships are established (Rogers, 1983).

Concurrent with the establishing of this relationship, teachers who view themselves as facilitators develop a discourse of student agency, communicating an ethic of care and mutual respect. If the learning goal is to promote student responsibility and agency then it is logical that students will need opportunities for learning about responsibility through the “right” to make decisions. Within this environment, students are trusted to learn (Rogers 1983).

Trust requires teachers to actively construct students’ perceptions of the student teacher relationship. This is power relationship can be mediated by the teachers’ physical personification of power (Sewell, 2006). For example:

...the only two ways I probably have a class around me, one will be a circle where we all see each other so I’m just in the ring with them or that they’re in front of me. I’m trying to point out that this isn’t about me being above you.

Linda is conscious to reduce the student teacher power differential, which she communicates through careful body language, coherent with a facilitative approach to teaching and learning. She believes that the physical way of being within your class is an important part of the role of the teacher as a facilitator, promoting of student agency. It is principal that body language be considered carefully by teachers positioning as themselves as a facilitator. I argue that it is possible that activities and entities such as body language, management of inappropriate student behaviour and class routines can actively work against the promotion of student agency, as there is a fine line between promoting compliance and teacher domination, which is a binary opposite to facilitation and student agency. As previously mentioned when discussing the management of student behaviour, it is necessary that teachers fluidly move along a power relationships continuum, promoting student agency where possible and taking back responsibility when the student’s power is misused. For example:

If you want more rights and responsibilities then there’s more responsibility [for you] and rights that come with that. If you want to give up some of [your responsibility] then I will take that on and [your rights will be reduced]. (Mia)

Many authors present the role of facilitation of learning in a learning community as unproblematic and sequential (Angelle & Anfara, 2008; McGrath, 2003; D. Solomon, et al., 1996; Watkins, 2005; Wenger, et al., 2002). For example, if you give the students trust they will respond in a predictable (Watkins, 2005) and uniform manner. This does not reflect the complexity of the physical education class. I argue that it is important to understand that balancing student agency against teacher responsibility has a fluidity that teachers are required to respond to at any given moment. It requires significant expertise to manage the student teacher and peer relationships while maintaining an ethic of care and facilitating the dialectical relationships between all entities and activities necessary for the development of a community.

The teachers in this study view themselves as facilitators of learning and there is evidence to suggest that this is initially achieved by developing genuine and meaningful community relationships. Furthermore it is important to remember there is a dialectical relationship between student agency and the employment of participatory, socio-cultural inquiry pedagogies which simultaneously necessitate, require and allow the teacher to adopt a facilitation role. This will be discussed in detail in chapter seven.

The role of the teacher as a facilitator can be problematic and when considering the nature of relationships in a learning community and it is therefore important to consider the pragmatic and hierarchical structure of secondary schools and in particular junior school physical education. Physical education teachers interact with large numbers of students relatively infrequently (two or three periods per week) which immediately foreshadows the difficulties of developing genuine and meaningful relationship with each individual student. This situation must stretch teacher resources considerably and cast doubt on their ability to “connect” with each student in their class however well intended they may be. This issue is explored briefly in chapter eight as a barrier to the development of a learning community.

Summary

I believe that the teachers in this study are skilled at reading and responding to the class and students in front of them, while keeping the curriculum goals and their beliefs about participant roles in the learning community to the forefront. The physical education communities explored in this study are not exclusive to, but are resultant of, the previously discussed activities and entities constructed by teachers in collaboration with students. A physical education learning community is built on the sturdy foundations of the teachers' ethic of care and communicated through explicit discourses of community related to positive community relationships. The ethic of care is inclusive of the diversity of students in the community and promotes all students' agency, belonging and value. The ethic of care extends to developing students' understanding of rights and responsibilities when participating within a learning community. The roles played by students and teachers are central contributors to the altruistic activities of the learning community.

Introduction chapter seven

In Chapter Six it was established that the development of altruistic student teacher and peer relationships are foundational to the development of a learning community, as communities do not exist without altruistic participant relationships and behaviours (Watkins 2005). Having explored how teachers develop the initial class community relationships the way is now open to develop understandings about of the relationship between *NZC* (2007) and the associated pedagogies congruent with the roles of the participants and the requisite socio- moral outcomes necessary for a learning community. Chapter seven will explore how the *NZC* (2007) has inextricable synergies with the altruistic understandings and behaviour required for the development of community and how teachers develop activities for learning about community. It will discuss how students learn about the social through social learning activities.

Chapter Seven: Discussion on learning activities promoting a learning community: learning about the social and social learning

Introduction

This chapter contributes to one of the main questions of this study, “how” teachers develop their classes as learning communities. This is achieved by exploring “what” specific curriculum is taught and learned to promote a learning community and “how” it is learned. As previously discussed in Chapter Five, the development of community requires the development of positive student teacher and peer relations, as learning communities require participants who think and act in altruistic ways to ensure the social, cognitive, spiritual and physical learning needs of all students are met (Alton-Lee, 2003; Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005). A community in a school has ethical and moral dimension and a significant question of the study is how the physical education teacher develops this ethical and moral dimension to a learning community? In answer to this question this chapter explores two major themes. The first theme explores the nature of the relationship between the *NZC (2007)* and what is taught by the teachers to promote altruistic community relations. The second is an exploration of the nature of the pedagogies associated with teaching and learning for the promotion of a learning community.

1. Learning about altruistic physical education learning communities: learning about the social

As discussed previously “schema” are ways individuals think and behave in relation to behaviours associated in specific contexts. For example, people have specific schema associated with a job interview (Stith & Roth, 2008), or when working in an after school job or as a family member. As applied to a physical education class community, teachers work to develop specific student schema associated with their thinking and behaviour within an altruistic physical education learning community. It would appear advantageous for physical education teachers to attach significance to and plan to influence to students’ schema, conditioning the students’ thinking and peer interactions. Overall evidence in this study suggests that influencing student schema for physical education is about developing student’s understandings of community, their role within a community and how all members have the opportunity to contribute positively to community.

In this study the characteristics of a community are altruistic in nature and students require socio-moral attributes and associated student behaviours for the successful development of a community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Watkins, 2005). The students' socio-moral reasoning maturity impacts significantly on the teacher's ability to mould a class into a community and further, into a learning community (Miller, et al., 1997). Evidence from the study implies that the teachers interviewed explicitly develop discourses of community to influence student schema associated with the advancement of an altruistic class community, which are coincidentally also *NZC (2007)* goals. As Clint stated

...personal quality (socio-moral outcomes) for us is part of our achievement objectives. So I work on getting [the students] to understand...the curriculum and the school values. (Clint).

In this study it is the socio-moral content within the *NZC (2007)* and the teachers' understanding of the vision, principles and underlying philosophical concepts that provide a framework for the teachers. The teachers have clear ideas about the essential socio-moral elements from the *NZC (2007)* which contribute to the development of a learning community. All teachers in this study identified similar taught content as contributing towards the development of community:

- Team work, leadership, and followship;
- Participation, inclusion and involvement;
- Personal and social rights and responsibilities;

The teaching of the socio-moral learning outcomes occurs at the beginning of the year with all Year Nine and Ten classes. The teachers believe that these units of learning contribute to the development of what they describe as the 'class culture.'

...[the unit of learning is called] the 'school values in action'. We're identifying the school values and we're teaching around those values. We make a poster and a symbol..... it should involve some of their goals [and] certainly should involve their values that they choose as a class... I always try

to encourage mine to come up with some sort of a saying. [for example] “Serf’s up”... and S-E-R-F stood for Respect, Effort might’ve been Selflessness and F, I can’t remember what F was...(Brad)

These findings are similar to a study undertaken by Miller, Bredemeier and Shields (1997), in which the explicit facilitation of students understanding of the socio-moral content, similar to that of the *NZC (2007)*, is viewed as being vital to the development of a moral or altruistic community. In this study the values developed by the teachers and students then become the subject of the learning outcomes for following classes, allowing the students to understand what the values look like “in action.” Throughout this process the teachers develop discourses fostering the students’ understandings of the altruistic behaviours in a community. For example;

....one of the first things that I want them to do is start to think that they’re going to be a team throughout the year. I always use little phrases and things to support that like “together to get there,” those sorts of things. So that together should we get our class culture positive and get it right, then we’re all going to go a lot further (Brad).

Further conversations aligned with student agency and socio-moral learning can be identified in statements made by Clint.

...if you’re going to empower someone to lead, then you must follow them, you must listen to them, you must be a really good active listener, you also must engage within the group, you can’t stand off, you can’t be a space watcher, you’ve gotta actually [be] involved them. When you’re asked to do something, you do something, [when] you’re asked to contribute your idea of what you think, you contribute your idea, when you’re asked to perform something physical by the people in the group then you do that and you do that fairly promptly and quickly so that everyone can function. (Clint)

This conversation highlights the previously mentioned themes of contribution, participation, leadership and followership related to the collective and individuals. The explicit teaching of ‘values’ or socio-moral learning outcomes such as intra and

interpersonal skills, are a significant finding of the study, as programme goals which promote empathy, moral reasoning maturity, task motivation and the development of personal and social responsibility are essential for the development of a learning community (Alton-Lee, 2003; Carr, 2005; Cecchini, et al., 2007; Lieber, 2002; Martinek & Hellison, 1998; Miller, et al., 1997). The collective and individual conversations the teachers have with the students are major contributors to the socio-moral discourse.

2. Socio-cultural and social learning pedagogies

Learning about the socio-moral can be integrated into curriculum and develop community through task design (Alton-Lee, 2003). Socio-moral curriculum content and “social” learning pedagogies are separate entities which are dialectically related providing student learning opportunities about community. It is relevant to assume that socio-moral learning necessitates tasks that are social in nature, providing an authentic context for learning (Alton-Lee, 2003; Selby & Pike, 2000; Watkins, 2005). In previous discussions it was identified that the explicit teaching of socio-moral content is a prerequisite to the development of a physical education community as improvements in students’ interpersonal skills and moral behaviour can contribute to the development of a cohesive community.

2a. Goal and task coherence

The tasks, activities, and entities of the physical education class are dialectic and contribute to the discourses surrounding the development of community. Learning activities and tasks designed to grow a learning community need to be carefully constructed and aligned to ensure that the intrinsic messages of the required discourse are taught, caught and discovered. If the assumption is made that learning is socio-cultural in nature, then it is reasonable to assume that the pedagogies used in physical education will be authentic to this view of learning, allowing students the opportunity to explore the learning outcomes in a “social” movement context. I argue that it is difficult to learn socio-moral learning outcomes when tasks are constructed for individual engagement. I also argue that learning about the social requires social learning tasks. This statement is supported by a landmark study of social

relationships in classrooms, which reported that the design of the learning tasks were significant in the development of student engagement and also social interactions (Bossert, 1979 cited in Alton-Lee 2003). It is important to note that the student learning activities in this study are social and instrumental in nature. For example:

...it's about physical activity and ...[minor games]... One of my first sessions about wellbeing is around playing noodle tag and you can cover every one of the [Hauora] dimensions within a game of noodle tag. (Clint)

This is significant as it demonstrates that the teachers are adept at using social and instrumental approaches to facilitate learning about the socio-moral dimensions of the NZC (2007). This often achieved through teacher led reflection on the movement task. The next quote demonstrates this point.

[The students] suddenly realise that there's more going on in this game than just tagging...you can pick on situations and you can see the kids you are left [with] at the end and you ask them [as a class] how they feel. Why do you run past someone to free someone else? 'Oh he's a friend of mine', 'so some people you will free up, and other people you will ignore.' So you can address those sorts of issues...

Logan: At the end of the year he did this balance thing and you balanced on other people and we had to trust them and stuff like that.

Tim: [we learned about]...role modelling and...

Kelsey: The school values [attitudes and values, e.g. trust, respect, honesty] and stuff.

The students are able to identify how they are learning through movement tasks such as balance and pyramids, but what they are learning, in this case are the school values. Not only does the shape of the pedagogies employed by the teacher influence peer relationships in the class, it also sends messages about pedagogical caring for the students, which has the ability to influence student motivation (Alton-Lee, 2003). This pedagogical caring is based on the concepts of *awhina*, *whanaungatanga*, and

tuakana and teina, important in all relationships in a physical education class (Alton-Lee, 2003).

2b. The social family of pedagogies

There are social learning tasks and activities which have similar underpinning assumptions known as the “social family” of models and methods (Eggen & Kauchak, 2006; Joyce, et al., 2000), which can facilitate learning about the social. Social learning tasks provide opportunities for collaborative group work with individual accountability mechanisms. These tasks promote student interaction, which encourage the processes of cooperation, collaboration and communication to facilitate learning for all participants (Alton-Lee, 2003; Watkins, 2005). Some authors believe that when teachers structure tasks which are socio-cultural, then there is a greater impact on students’ learning (Alton-Lee, 2003; Fore, et al., 2006; Gillies & Ashman, 2003; Watkins, 2005). Consistent with Bossert’s (1979) findings, the ‘social’ task structures contribute to the development of student agency, belonging, class cohesion and cater for the diversity of the class. As Linda stated the tasks “build tolerance, and respect helps connections.” In a learning community the use of socio-cultural pedagogies is preferred to pedagogies which consist of “single task, large group formats and fixed academic hierarchies”, where students became more competitive and less inclined to help or contribute to class members learning (Bossert, 1979 cited in Alton Lee 2003). Large group single task formats therefore preclude the promotion of student agency and community, and are therefore undesirable if they are predominant as they do not contribute to a discourse of community. In social learning tasks the learning domains are not distinct or mutually exclusive in practice but are integrated (Alton-Lee, 2003). Students are able to learn about the affective, cognitive and psychomotor domains through the use of social learning tasks.

2bi. Conversations and questioning as social learning tasks

In this study questioning was referred to by the teachers as conversations. Conversations and questioning are identified as an essential pedagogical tool used to promote individual and collective sense making. All the teachers in this study use conversations and questioning extensively. I believe it is important to understand the

use of the word “conversation”, as opposed to questioning. The word conversation is defined as “an informal exchange of ideas” (Oxford English Dictionary). The word conversation implies a respectful and reciprocal power relationship consistent with a facilitative approach to relationships with students. For example Mia discussed;

The conversation I’d have with some of those other students is, ‘OK, we have Jack who hasn’t been involved, so how are we going to work towards including him? So what type of things would I see in the class to indicate that you have thought about this? So at the end of the class if I go and talk to Jack, what might he tell me about how he feels that lesson went?’ and... just getting those students to think a bit more broadly. (Mia)

In this conversation Mia is not only attempting to create student cognitive dissonance to stimulate thinking, she is moving the responsibility for Jacks’ inclusion in an activity from herself to the students, conveying messages of trust, responsibility, inclusion. This action personifies reciprocal power relationships, essential for maturing socio-moral reasoning, student agency and community. It is debateable that questioning such as this is a “conversation”, however the intention is to converse with the students to facilitate learning as opposed to directing.

2bii. The warm up as a leadership learning activity

A common theme identified in all the interviews was the use of the warm-up as a learning activity for leadership and class cohesion. The warm-up routine, at the start of every physical education class is a group activity and teachers chose to maximise learning time in their classes by utilising it as a learning opportunity. For example Mia discusses:

[The warm up is about] teaching the students how to be leaders ...so if you’re going to run this activity and provide [leadership] information for all, it’s not an exclusive club to be running an activity, [all the students] can do it... It also means that with structure, students ...actually feel empowered to step up because there’s no failure. (Mia)

This is a successful leadership task and it is significant as:

...everyone knows what the warm-up's going to be...how it's going to run so therefore they can actually step into that role, and have an experience of what it's like to be a leader or to run an aspect of the class. (Mia).

The warm-up becomes part of the class activities and a discourse that promotes student agency, belonging, and cohesion. The evidence of the study suggests that the teachers engage in a considerable depth of thinking about the students' learning which reflects sustained pedagogical caring for the students. The discourse of care is prevalent through much of the study's evidence and it makes a noteworthy contribution to the development of the learning community.

3. Social learning model and methods

Along with individual and collective conversations and questioning with students, teachers reported on using a variety of group activities, which they structure in ways to meet the students learning needs. This is a significant finding of the study of the models and methods used to promote students' learning about the social, the most often referred to were Hellison's Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Model, adapted versions of Experiential Learning and Mosston's Divergent Discovery Style and adapted instrumental group activities. All the teachers adapted these participatory models and methods to promote a range of outcomes including the socio-moral. For example:

We do lots of group activity-based things where the students are given responsibility to solve a problem, [for example] to get the group up there and do a performance. We do a bit of performance in Te Reo and dance, little mini little sporty type things, we don't really do sports ed in a big way 'til year eleven but we do little versions of it especially in... our 'school values' unit. (Linda)

Activities designed for group problem solving are a significant feature of the interviews and observations. These models realise a number of purposes related to the development of community. In the design of these tasks, learners are required to

depend on each other in order to accomplish their tasks (Brown, 1997; McGrath, 2003), promoting accountability, interdependence and social interaction, characteristics important for learning about the social and social learning. These entities are essential to the development of a community. It is also important to note that social and instrumental pedagogical models such as Experiential Learning and Mosston's Divergent Discovery are essentially problem solving and inquiry/knowledge generation models. As previously mentioned in Chapter Four, the models can be adapted to increase or decrease student agency, along a power sharing continuum and can be used for inquiry/knowledge generation in a "fledgling" learning community. No evidence was found in this study signifying use of learner initiated inquiry, situated at the extreme right of the power sharing continuum, where the students develop their own curriculum goals and learning programmes.

4. Alternative definitions of success in physical education

Evidence from the study suggests that a focus on mastering socio-moral, cognitive and psychomotor skills, as opposed to performance outcomes, was another contribution to the discourse of community identified in this study. As highlighted by Clint, who stated, "*how* you do what you do, is equally important to us, because that's actually what we're about." Developing alternative definitions of success for students in physical education serves an important purpose in the development of a physical education community. Some authors in physical education have identified that a focus on performance pedagogies emphasising athletic performance and competition are exclusionary and disengaging (Ennis, 2000; Fernandez-Balboa, 1993; Laker, 2000) for many. Class discourses send messages to students about what is valued and not valued and evidence in this study suggests that it is the individuals and the processes of their learning which are valued.

[I question the students about] who in that situation or circumstance has some sort of skill that could [allow them to lead]. It could be physical (motor) skill [knowledge] and in other situations it could be a verbal skill (Clint)

...lots of cooperative activities within the group so where there's not necessarily a stronger person leading the others... they've gotta work that out for themselves so almost problem solving kind of stuff really. (Linda)

Previous quotes in this study would indicate that the teachers in this study value learning within the socio-moral domain and socio-cultural learning processes. Clint and Linda reinforce this point, with an emphasis on a range of student learning process from the cognitive and socio-moral as well as the psychomotor domain. This is a discourse associated with alternative definitions of success, fostering the valuing of diversity; creating space for students to contribute and developing a sense of belonging and agency; the hallmarks of a community. It is significant that it is not the outcome of the activity which is valued by the teachers and it is not the winning of the games which is important. It is the process the team uses to achieve the outcome which is important. I believe that opportunities for alternative definitions of success in physical education are essential as it creates explicit learning opportunities about the social that are dialectally linked to students' perceptions of caring. A discourse of inclusion and alternative definitions of success in physical education are inextricably linked to quality teaching practices (Alton-Lee, 2003) and the development of a physical education learning community.

The teachers in this study employ social, participatory, inquiry models, methods and strategies which create opportunities for students to work cooperatively and discuss authentic socio-moral issues. It is through the use of these social participatory pedagogies that "group cohesion is promoted and can become rooted in a collective community identity" (Miller, et al., 1997, p. 122). It is only through "peer interaction fostered by social pedagogies, that students can come to claim a group social, moral and learning identity otherwise known as a learning community" (Hellison, 1985; Miller, et al., 1997, p. 122). Evidence suggests that the pedagogies the teachers in this study chose to employ do contribute significantly to the creation of student understanding of altruistic relationships required for the development of a learning community.

Summary

As suggested by findings from this study, this chapter has provided an understanding of the nature of the relationships between the *NZC (2007)* and activities which contribute to the entities required for the development of an altruistic community. The explicit teaching of socio-moral content through the adaptation of socio-cultural, participatory, inquiry based pedagogies allows the students opportunities to learn about the social and learning to live within a community (Delores, et al., 1998). The explicit teaching of socio-moral understandings and skills also creates opportunities for participants in the community to value a range of contributions from diverse students thus developing alternative definitions of success other than but not excluding those who excel in the psychomotor domain. There is evidence to suggest that it is through these learning activities the students come to a point where they have an identity otherwise understood as a class learning community through the employment of pedagogies which encourage inquiry, knowledge generation, reflection and meta-learning (Watkins, 2005).

Introduction of chapter eight

Having explored the one of the major questions of the study, how physical education teachers establish a learning community, Chapter Eight will explore the teacher philosophies as derived from the evidence. This chapter will provide information as to why physical education teachers in this study do what they do and how societal philosophies create barriers for the establishment of physical education learning communities.

Chapter eight: Discussion on philosophy to practice

“Few are those who can see with their own eyes and hear with their own hearts”

Albert Einstein.

Introduction

This chapter explores the individual and societal philosophies which influence the teachers' choices about implementation of the *NZC (2007)* and consequently the development of a learning community. There are two themes in this chapter. The first theme explores the philosophical positioning of the teachers and how this relates to the philosophical positioning of the *NZC (2007)*. I argue that congruence between teacher and *NZC (2007)* philosophies creates a resonance which is a significant contributor to the establishment of a learning community. The second theme explores societal philosophical positions which create barriers to the establishment of a learning community, thus answering the final question of the study.

1. “We are about people” Humanist philosophies in physical education

The teachers in this study do see with their own eyes and listen with their own hearts. In their hearts they listen to their philosophical positioning, they understand what it looks like in their physical education classes; they understand what it means to their students and to the community.

...you can stand in front of a class and have them jump through hoops for forty weeks a year if you choose to but if you're there for the real potential and purpose of physical education and you're passionate about that in terms of the ways in which it can develop those kids as people then you'll teach differently but it takes time. (Linda)

They have a humanist philosophical vision that is central to their passion and energy for teaching and informs their practice. Humanism can be understood as a philosophical outlook that emphasises the intrinsic value, dignity and rationality of human beings (T. Davies, 2008; Rohmann, 2000). Audi (1999) explained that this philosophy occupies a middle position which states that humans have unique capabilities and abilities, to be cultivated and celebrated for their own sake (Audi,

1999). Humanist philosophers believe that ‘human nature is perfectible’ and it is possible for humanity to develop a ‘moral sense and responsibility’ which communicates hope and value the ideas of ‘possibility and progress’ (Audi 1999). When applied to learning and education, humanism is manifested by the all round development of personality and the individual and that human progress is dependent on open communication, discussion, criticism and unforced consensus. (Audi, 1999; T. Davies, 2008; Farmer, 1984; Rohmann, 2000).

When considering the germane evidence of this study, I argue that the teachers embody a humanist philosophical positioning as they “teach to change the world” (Brookfield, 1995). Their humanist philosophical positioning is evident in the following statements, which are a summary of all the beliefs about teaching of the teachers in this study.

One of the most important things is that I see myself as a teacher of students, not merely a teacher of a subject... I ... see them as people, developing them as the whole person. (Linda)

It’s about teaching the students not teaching the subject. It’s more about life. (Brad)

Clint summed up the dominant philosophical positioning of the teachers when he explained;

We are about people, we want to develop the people and ... you try [to] build them and build them and build them and turn them out as better people. (Clint)

Physical education is viewed by the teachers as a context or a vehicle for the development of students’ life skills which contribute to the all round growth of people: a core tenet of humanist philosophy (T. Davies, 2008).

It is significant that the teachers in this study have personal philosophical orientations which are dialectically related and have a muscular resonance with the vision, principles and underpinning physical education philosophy of the *NZC (2007)*. The teachers live their philosophy by working within their sphere of influence to make a difference (Covey, 1989). The teachers believe that the implementation of a dominant socio-moral discourse of community informs students' present and future lives, thus adhering to the humanist values of 'moral sense and responsibility' and the idea of 'possibility and progress'. As Clint states,

...[We're making a difference to the lives of our students by teaching] social skills and looking after themselves, [their] wellbeing. (Clint)

One of the things I tell them is the most important job you're ever going to have when you leave here is that you're going to be a parent. You do that job well and you'll create so many good things around you and possibly there are some things that you're going to have to put in place to do that. You're going to have to be a good learner. No one's going to teach you how to do this. (Clint)

The underlying humanist philosophy within the *NZC (2007)* is "based on the assumption that the individual is unique and is in the process of internal change as a quest to achieve full personal integration in a changing environment" (Culpan, 1996/97, p. 210). The above quote indicates a stalwart resonance and coherence between the teachers' humanist philosophy and the socio-critical humanism of the *NZC (2007)*, which results in a significant humanist discourse of community in physical education classes. By educating students in a humanist manner about socio-moral learning outcomes, the teachers are striving to give students the opportunity for full and meaningful lives in changing and challenging contexts.

There was no evidence in this study of teachers problematising the humanist values selected as philosophy for physical education, which is a limitation of the study. There is considerable scope in physical education for discussion about the nature of universal and relativist values (Arnold, 1979), highlighting the complex and

contradictory nature of ethical and moral dilemmas inherent in sport in a neoliberal context. This topic would benefit from further discussion, however it is not seen as making an essential contribution to the central tenets of this study.

2. Physical Education as a contributor to community

The *HPE (1999)* and consequently the *NZC (2007)* were designed to improve the social and learning environments of our schools, and to enhance the health prospects of all students in a changing and challenging 21st Century (Tasker, 2004p209). Both the *HPE (1999)* and the *NZC (2007)* are obviously humanist in their philosophical underpinnings, and when combined with teacher humanist philosophical positioning create a discourse of possibility and progress seeking to contribute positively towards school and wider community. For example,

...they're developing a wider sense of where they're placed in the world, in the wider community, not just themselves and in their class. Like, how can they as an individual contribute to the wider dynamic that's going on within the class, within the school, within the community? (Mia)

Developing student awareness of their rights and responsibilities as members of a community is a significant underlying construct of the teachers' philosophy and practice. Not only are the teachers espousing the philosophy of the *NZC (2007)*, they are living it by striving to grow students' ability to live constructively within a community. As previously mentioned the coherence and authenticity between the philosophy of physical education in the *NZC (2007)* and the teachers philosophical positioning is a very real strength. This coherence conveys a dominant discourse of community facilitating student achievement of curriculum goals and providing possibilities for future life long learning within and contribution to, a community.

The other thing I still believe is that quality physical education or ...physical education well taught [has] a positive impact on the whole school culture. Because..., [the students] are taking what they've learnt here and...applying it [elsewhere in the school]. We're encouraging them too...we're explicitly making the links between what we do and the school mission and vision... I

don't think anyone else makes those links for them in the school. That should be really valued. (Linda)

The teachers strive to develop the students' ability to live constructively within a community and to facilitate the transfer of this learning to multiple communities, within which students live. Linda believes this goal and learning needs to be valued by others in the wider community.

3. Philosophical constructs hindering the development of a learning community

Students' and teachers' 'ways of being' are socially constructed by the neoliberal discourses which influence all aspects of our lives (Roberts, 2009). Living within a neoliberal discourse is to be bombarded with messages of rampant consumerism which are dialectically related to and inevitably develop a focus on individual needs (Roberts, 2009). Sport and physical education are socially constructed phenomena which are inevitably shaped by the societal neoliberal discourses within which they exist (Roberts, 2009). In a neoliberal context, sport and athletes are often viewed as marketable commodities and for many participants in sport, a 'way of being' is socially constructed individualism resulting in self promotion, status enhancement and profit making (Arnold, 1979).

In a wider neoliberal economic climate which favours a "job slots" view (Tinning, et al., 1993 cited in Culpan, 2004), the demands of the marketplace and international competitiveness direct "that education is viewed as a commodity to be traded" (Culpan, 2004, p. 227). Neoliberal discourses dictate that a job slots view of education flavour physical education teachers' philosophical views of the purposes of physical education. In a physical education context a neoliberal view is embodied as a "performance pedagogy", characterised by a paradigm of science or a technocratic view of physical education (Culpan, 1996/97). Neoliberal teacher philosophies promoting performance orientated curriculum goals are common in the wider physical education community (Gillespie, et al., 2007) and I argue that a significant number of teachers in our profession are influenced by this discourse. This view of physical education is constructed as the ability of teachers to produce physically skilled performers (Laker, 2000). Evidence from this study suggests that this neoliberal view

of physical education is a hegemonic tension to be negotiated by teachers who subscribe to a socio-moral humanist philosophy. Mia discussed barriers to creating a physical education learning community.

... if a head of department just says ... it's important that [the students] can kick and....pass and...you're not teaching it! If that structure gets put on me then how I do things possibly has to change... (Mia)

Conflicting teacher philosophies within a department, the wider school and society hinder the development of a learning community in a physical education context. The dominant neoliberal performance discourse has primacy over humanist philosophy (Laker, 2000) and conflict can occur between teachers in departments due to differing philosophies and practices. This also raises the questions of how the neoliberal discourse influences students' understanding of a "way of being" in physical education: expecting a performance pedagogy and receiving a humanist pedagogy has the potential to cause conflict with both teachers and peers.

In wider school politics, teachers and departments of physical education can be perceived as a less valued contributor to the "job slot" goals of neoliberal economic productivity (Culpan, 1996/97). Curriculum resourcing decisions in schools is a contested terrain which is impacted on by the neoliberal productivity.

The problem that we face as physical educators...is that the information we're teaching [the students] about, class culture and [life skills], which is also within our curriculum area and our objectives [is not valued] and until that's brought onto par and valued within schools, then unfortunately I think we might be the poor cousins...cause it's not seen as academic and that's where we have the problems with parents [not understanding what we do]. (Clint)

The perception that physical education does not contribute to the serious business of educating students for jobs creates a hegemonic academic hierarchy which influences attitudinal and resourcing decisions in schools

The dominant neoliberal performance discourse informs the school community understandings of the curriculum of physical education. For example:

...[other teachers] perceive I'm doing nothing...I mean I always use the example ...I was out on the field and they were doing touch and I was...lying on the field with sunhat on, and someone coming up and going "well don't you have the easiest job in the world" or "lucky for some" and I'm like, no it's not lucky for some. You know this is the result of three terms of really focused and intense work on my part to be able to have this running like this... that is hard because people only see the outside, or they...go "she's got those bloody kids outside again" or "unsupervised." So they don't understand or they don't know that, actually they are supervised, that there are boundaries set. (Mia)

Mia's statement requires some deconstruction. Mia has given the responsibility for running the class to the students and is indicating her trust that they can manage this task by absenting herself from the lesson, but supervising remotely. However to outsiders this action is interpreted as unprofessional, making assumption about interpretations of practice (Brookfield, 1995). The outside observers captured by the societal neoliberal discourses surrounding physical education and sport, would "see" this situation as physical education teachers playing meaningless and inconsequential games as opposed to using instrumental pedagogies coherent with humanist socio-cultural views of learning.

Neoliberal perspectives on physical education are manifested in the contested terrain of hegemonic social relations within the school community, influencing decisions related to the curriculum resourcing. Physical education is not the privileged or advantaged party. In the schools of the teachers in this study, physical education in the junior school is allocated two periods per week, (as opposed to three or four periods allocated to other academic subjects), a reflection of the importance and value afforded to physical education. 'Time' as a contested resource is a limiting factor for the development of classes as a learning community and for the implementation of curriculum.

...[the amount of time we have with the students is problematic], because you do have to create some kind of relationship with them, they do need to get to

know you as a person or you know, have that opportunity. For some kids that takes longer than others. (Linda)

I find sometimes only having an hour [is problematic]...you try and build your class culture,...you're really getting into something and you're really going for it and the bell goes...that makes it a bit difficult. (Brad)

Developing students' knowledge and skills which allow them to learn to live constructively within a community is a complex process which requires skilful facilitation, understanding from local communities, and time. Time is required to move students to the point where they can transfer socio-moral knowledge to contexts outside of physical education and the curriculum of physical education is time poor due to curriculum resourcing decisions. The teachers of physical education in this study teach to create opportunities for students to learn knowledge and skills which are valuable to multiple communities. This needs to be valued by society given the hope and the potential they have to make a difference.

Summary

This chapter has explored the philosophies impacting on the establishment of physical education learning communities. The teachers in this study are subscribers to a socio-critical humanism which informs their practice. The coherence of the practitioner philosophies with the physical education philosophy of the *NZC (2007)* creates a seamless authenticity between physical education curriculum goals and practice, an obvious strength in the development of an altruistic learning community. The humanist philosophy also informs the nature of the participant relationships within the learning communities, contributing to the ethic of care and ultimately the discourse of community, essential to the development of the learning community.

This is in direct conflict with the dominant discourses surrounding sport and therefore by proxy, physical education. Neoliberal discourses shape and govern participants' thinking and practices in physical education, which is in conflict with the humanist philosophies of physical education learning communities. This conflict results in curriculum decision making which is the personification of hegemonic academic and

social relations in schools and the wider community. These relations impact on the ability of physical education teachers to establish physical education classes as learning communities.

Introduction to chapter nine

The final chapter of the thesis is the conclusion. It is fitting that a conclusion takes the time to review and reflect on the findings of the study, drawing out the main points. Part one will briefly reiterate the research questions, design and methodology before discussing the main findings of the investigation. Part two will indulge in an exploration of the implications for practitioners and recommendations for further investigation.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter nine has two primary functions. Firstly it will reflect on the journey of the study and secondly, it will indulge in the luxury of imagining the route forward. These are both activities which will allow for a satisfying and proper conclusion to the study.

Part one of chapter nine begins by revisiting the study's research questions, design and methodology. The main points of the discussion chapters will also be reiterated. Part two of the chapter will explore the implications derived from the study of physical education learning communities for practitioners and physical education teacher education (PETE), the scope of which will then be broadened to develop some recommendations for future investigation.

Part 1. Reflecting on the journey

This qualitative case study is unique within the physical education community in New Zealand as it is the first time that learning communities in physical education classes have been investigated. Initially the impetus for the study was to seek solutions to mediate disruptive peer cultures which are sometimes a feature of physical education classes. It was envisaged that developing a learning community (Nuthall, 2007) would allow for the use of participatory socio-cultural pedagogies required to implement the socio-critical content of the NZC (2007). Therefore, as mentioned in the introduction to this the study, the aim of the study was to investigate if teachers of physical education develop classes as learning communities, and to gain an understanding of the entities and activities that facilitate this development. A secondary aim was to explore entities that hindered the development of learning communities in physical education.

Five major discussion points have evolved out of the study, and are identified as essential to the development of a physical education learning community and are

derived from the discussion chapters. It is these themes which will shape the main findings of this concluding chapter.

1. The research process

In pursuit of these investigative aims and in order to seek answers to the major questions of the study, I conducted semi-structured interviews with four physical education teachers, and concurrently approached one teacher who agreed to participate in an in-depth investigation. The in-depth investigation included a focus group interview with six students and ten observations of a Year Nine physical education class of the teacher selected for the in-depth study. In-depth and detailed data was gathered and analysed. The constant comparative analysis method (Thomas, 2009) provided insight into the major constructs which contribute to the establishment of a learning community in physical education. Limitations of the study are discussed in the introductory chapter of the thesis.

2. Answering the research questions

2a. The learning community continuum

Discussion and evidence in the discussion chapters highlighted the main points of the study. The first theme of the conclusion relates to a main question of study; do physical education teachers establish their classes as learning communities? It was reported that physical education teachers do develop their classes as learning communities, however some re-conceptualisation of the definition of a learning community and how they evolve was required.

Learning communities are often portrayed in the literature as a finished product, which are developed in a clear-cut sequential manner (Watkins, 2005). Evidence from the findings in this study indicates that the entities that contribute to the establishment of a learning community evolve from teacher centred beginnings to an entity which resembles an orchestra: participants with autonomy who take responsibility and make decisions about learning. The evidence from this study

suggests that learning communities in physical education evolve along a continuum, from the fledgling to the established.

A fledgling learning community is essentially teacher directed with a discourse of inquiry. In a fledgling learning community the teacher promotes student agency and learning through dialogue, questioning, tasks structured as problems to be solved, facilitating knowledge generation and reflection on meta-learning processes (Alton-Lee, 2003; Brown, 1997; McGee & Fraser, 2008; Sewell, 2006; Watkins, 2005). This is where the learning communities in this study were mostly positioned on the learning community continuum. Where the physical education learning community sits on the continuum is directly related to how and what power is allocated and to whom. Student agency and inquiry are essential constructs integral to the students' and community's ability to move along the learning community continuum and is developed by teachers giving more responsibility, power and agency to the students. These activities and entities contribute to the construction of a discourse of inquiry. Chapters Five and Seven discuss the significant detail of this discussion point. This is the first major theme identified in the study.

2b. Inquiry within a learning community

As already identified, a discourse of inquiry is the second theme and major discussion point of the study. In this study learning communities require inquiry as they have their roots in the constructivist theories of learning; cognitive and socio-cultural constructivism. Constructivist learning theories can be simplified into two simple statements: learning viewed as individual sense-making, and learning as viewed as students generating knowledge together, and are best represented by inquiry based learning approaches. In physical education, student learning is through inquiry based social learning activities which ultimately contribute to the discourses of inquiry, community and ultimately a learning community. Inquiry based learning activities can be positioned on the learning community continuum, where at one end there are inquiry learning activities controlled by the teacher and at the other controlled by the students. Group problem solving activities with teacher facilitated reflection and questioning are an example of the teacher controlled end of the continuum; the

beginnings of developing student agency and inquiry processes. Learner initiated inquiry is a learning activity lead and controlled by the students manifesting significant student agency.

2c. Learning about community

Within a discourse of inquiry students concurrently learn about the socio-moral, inquiry and meta-learning process necessary to contribute to a learning community. Learning about the socio-moral gives birth to a third concurrent discourse and discussion point, that of a discourse of community. The discourse of community is the foundation which supports all other learning within the community. As defined in this study, a community is altruistic, and therefore students are required understand the values and behaviours necessary to contribute to an altruistic community. The development of altruistic student “ways of being” within physical education is a worthy end in itself as it is content related to the *NZC (2007)*. Evidence in this study suggests that the teachers spend considerable time and effort explicitly facilitating opportunities for students to learn about socio-moral content explicit to the aim of building learning about community. In my opinion this is a most worthy contribution to the school and local community; a goal to be valued. Learning about community is also a necessary precursor for the successful use of inquiry based socio-cultural pedagogies requisite to moving along the learning community continuum. Evidence suggests that the employment of the socio-cultural pedagogies also helps to shape relationships within the community, as they evolve in a cooperative as opposed to competitive manner (Bossert, 1979). Students who are competitive and will not take responsibility for their own and assist others learning have difficulty in engaging with pedagogies and processes necessary for inquiry, knowledge generation, reflection and meta-learning. It therefore becomes necessary for students to learn the understandings and behaviours prerequisite to engaging with learning community processes. Teaching and learning about the socio-moral nature of community appears to contribute to the teacher’s ability to mediate peer culture and influence student’s way of being in physical education. A discourse of community explicitly addresses students’ way of being within a physical education and the evidence from this study suggests that this approach is effective.

The creation of a discourse of community concurrently with a discourse of inquiry, signposts a significant discussion point about the dialectical relationship between these two entities (Stith & Roth, 2008). Discourses send messages to students about what is valued within the community through student interpretation of dialogue, learning activities and assessments. If socio-moral and inquiry learning is valued then it is important that students receive clear messages about the value of these entities. For this to occur it is necessary that there is coherence between the learning goals of the community and task design. Learning about the social requires social or socio-cultural learning tasks and learning about inquiry necessitates the design of activities which require problem solving and inquiry. This is discussed in detail in Chapters Five and Seven.

2d. Relationships within a community

The fourth theme of the study is related to the nature of the participant relationships within a learning community and is the second major question of the study; how do physical education teachers establish classes as learning communities? Evidence in this study suggests that the process of evolving a class as a learning community appears to be initiated and supported by the quality of the student teacher relationships (Aultman, et al., 2009; Claxton, 2008; Noddings, 1995; Rogers, 1983; Wells & Claxton, 2002). It is important that student teacher relationships are genuine, authentic and altruistic in nature (Aultman, et al., 2009; Claxton, 2008; Noddings, 1995; Rogers, 1983; Wells & Claxton, 2002). It is significant that all teachers in the study emphasised the need to develop personal student teacher relationships, as this entity creates a personal springboard allowing for further dialogue with students to promote all learning (Aultman, et al., 2009). Trust is an essential entity in the student teacher relationship as it creates space for reciprocity and power sharing essential for the development of student agency. Student agency is in turn essential for the use of socio-cultural inquiry based pedagogies and the development of a learning community.

The student teacher relationship is enhanced by the teachers' ethic of care, personified through characteristic forms of attention such as showing students how to do a skill,

the honouring of requests, giving and receiving compliments, confronting students, showing concern for student health and wellbeing (Larson, 2006; Noddings, 1995). An ethic of care is also demonstrated by teachers striving to ensure that the diverse people within the class are integral class members and by developing student agency through employing participatory socio-cultural inquiry based pedagogies. In this context explicit understandings of students' rights and responsibilities are explored. Authentic with this view of relationships within a community, the teachers view themselves as facilitators, consistent with the entities of reciprocity and power sharing. The role of the teacher in a physical education learning community is one of a leader or facilitator. Their role is to lead the learning of the students by empowering students to take responsibility for their own actions, learning and lives. This is otherwise understood as developing student agency. Chapters Six and Seven provide further discussion.

2e. Philosophy to practice

The fifth theme identified in the study was the nature of the relationship between philosophy and practice. The congruence between the teacher and the *NZC (2007)* philosophy contributes to the seamless and authentic implementation of the document. The teachers in this study have a strong belief in the purposes of physical education within the *NZC (2007)*. They “live” the curriculum and I believe that this is an obvious strength of their practice as it provides a coherence and authenticity which informs all decisions and actions about learning. It sends clear messages to students about the purposes of physical education as viewed by these teachers.

Answering the last question of the study, barriers to establishing a learning community, the neoliberal context which socially constructs participant's ways of being in physical education and schools (Roberts, 2009) was identified as creating some significant barriers for the development of a learning community. Unfortunately physical education does not escape shaping by the neoliberal discourses and philosophies and many significant ‘others’ in schools and the local community view physical education through the neoliberal sporting lens. This persuades many that physical education's most important purpose in society is to contribute to the

production of skilled performers in sport (Laker, 2000). When viewed through this neoliberal lens and judged against the more valued traditional academic subject hierarchy of schools, physical education is viewed as inconsequential, with little to contribute to serious academic study. It is this neoliberal context that influences curriculum decision making in relation to subject resourcing, and physical education is often the poor relation. The socio-critical humanist learning outcomes of physical education in the *NZC (2007)* are not valued in spite of the contribution it could make to students' ability to learn to live positively within a community. Narrow neoliberal philosophies lead to a lack of understanding and support for the humanistic purposes of physical education. This can result in a lack of understanding and support for humanistic learning programmes by those with differing philosophies leading to decreased resourcing for marginalised curriculum subjects. Ultimately this results in lost or reduced learning opportunities for students in physical education.

Part two: mapping the journey forward.

Implications

When considering the learning community journey in the future there are many paths to be followed and many implications which could be explored. While keeping in mind the limitations of this study, it seems that evidence from this study suggests that the entities contributing to the development of a physical education class as a learning community can provide some guidance as to how teachers and teacher educators can begin to effectively lead learning in physical education. I have chosen to focus on five points as that could inform physical education practitioner praxis by directing attention to the central tenets of a physical education learning community.

The first implication is the opportunity the findings of this study provide for practitioners to understand the vision that a physical education learning community creates. The striving to evolve a physical education class as a learning community is exciting, challenging and provides a framework which synthesises a number of entities and activities together to form a vision, goal and direction worthy of consideration for reasons previously discussed. Development of a physical education

learning community is laudable for its own intrinsic learning rewards and additionally it is also consistent with the directions and requirements of the *NZC (2007)*.

The opportunity for physical education teachers to understand the nature of the relationship between the entities which contribute to the creation of a discourse of community is the second implication. This discourse is essential for building altruistic relationships requisite for students to learn together. Clarifying the nature of this relationship gives opportunity to highlight the role of each entity and how it contributes to the larger whole. Evidence in this study suggests that the socio-moral content of the *NZC (2007)* is the way teachers develop students' ways of being in physical education, mediating the peer culture as well as facilitating students' learning of what it means to contribute positively to a community. There is a dialectical relationship between the *NZC's (2007)* socio-moral content, the use of socio-cultural pedagogies and the development of the class peer culture to the point where it supports the learning of all participants in the class (Alton-Lee, 2003). The implications are that through understanding the nature of the relationships between the entities it becomes possible to mould the complexity of the entities into a cohesive whole, understood as a discourse of community. It is then possible to inform pre-service and in-service teachers of the importance of and possibilities for establishing a discourse of community.

The third implication is dialectically related to the second implication and considers the discourse of inquiry. As inquiry is a central tenet to this study's definition of a physical education learning community, a discourse of inquiry is an essential entity within it (Brown, 1997; Watkins, 2005). A significant implication of the study are the possibilities offered to pre-service and in-service teachers through a developed understanding of inquiry learning within physical education and how inquiry learning pedagogies can be positioned on a learning community continuum. This directs that significant thought be given to how reciprocity and power sharing are developed to promote student agency requisite for developing meta-learning skills.

The fourth implication is the opportunity provided to physical education practitioners to understand praxis: the relationship between philosophy, theory and practice. In this study the teachers appeared to apply their humanist philosophies and constructivist learning beliefs consistently and coherently to practice, resulting in the development of a physical education learning community. This sends clear messages to the students about ways of being and learning in physical education, as pedagogies coherent with philosophy and theory reinforced by dialogue result in discourses of community and inquiry. This is a significant implication as it directs that practitioners reflect on their beliefs and practices (Brookfield, 1995), including the role of teacher, for coherence, authenticity and consistency of messages about the purposes of the physical education.

The final implication is for physical education teacher education (PETE). The findings of this study have highlighted entities and activities which work coherently together to form a framework understood as a learning community. A physical education learning community provides vision and goals which communicate possibilities and opportunities for learning within physical education to practitioners. It also maps the terrain to be traversed or the teacher knowledge and skills necessary to allow teachers create a learning community. Therefore I believe that reflection on present physical education teacher education programmes is desirable to ensure that PETE is structured in ways to allow pre-service teachers to understand the potential and vision of learning communities and to learn the pre-requisite knowledge to allow them to develop their classes as learning communities.

Looking forward

This research was conducted by interviewing four teachers and six students and observing one class. Due to the design of the investigation it is not possible that the findings from this study be representative of the wider physical education school community as a small number of teachers and students were interviewed and one class involved in the study, consistent with case study design (Bogden & Biklen, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1988; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2007). Many questions have arisen during the investigative journey which includes:

- Are there other ways that teachers can and do mediate a class peer culture to allow for the utilisation of socio-cultural pedagogies and achievement of socio-critical learning outcomes in physical education?
- What does an established learning community look like in physical education and how do we move students towards this vision?
- Does each class have a differing learning community journey or do all classes follow a similar pattern? What is the nature of the development of physical education classes as learning communities over the course of a year?
- How do we ensure that pre-service physical education teachers have understandings, knowledge and skills to create their own classes as learning communities?

Final comment

“We teach to change the world”

(Brookfield, 1995)

I began the journey of my thesis with some trepidation and excitement about investigating the topic of learning communities in physical education; trepidation due to the unknown territory to be explored and excitement due to the learning possibilities. It has been a privilege to have the opportunity to undertake the journey alongside the teachers and students who participated in the study and to have the chance to engage in an extraordinary creative process. It was a privilege to have the opportunity to watch an expert practitioner teaching, leaving me in awe of their knowledge and ability. To have the opportunity to delve into the participant teachers’ ways of being in physical education has increased the already significant respect I felt for them. The students’ insights were a joy and through participating in this study, are a gift to the teaching profession.

The teachers in this study give many gifts to many people. Not only have they given the physical education profession a most significant and valued gift by participating in

this study, they also give their students, the schools, and the local community gifts everyday. The students interviewed believed that in physical education they learn some important skills which will allow them to live positively in a community. What better gift can an individual give to anyone? This special gift needs to be valued and supported by schools and the local community. The teachers in this study do make a difference and do teach to change the world.

Appendices

Appendix 1



The Development of Learning Communities in Physical Education. **Information for Teacher Interviewees**

My name is Sue McBain. I am completing a Masters of Teaching and Learning at the University of Canterbury, College of Education, School of Sciences and Physical Education under the supervision of Ian Culpan, Principal Lecturer and Head of the School of Sciences and Physical Education and Dr Janinka Greenwood, Dean of Post Graduate Studies.

Selection of participants

You have been asked to participate in this research due to your reputation within the Physical Education community and I believe you have extensive knowledge to offer physical education in relation to this area of study.

The aim of the project

It is a common assumption within the physical education teaching community that effective physical educators in some way foster positive relationships within a caring, inclusive, non discriminatory and cohesive classroom environment. The purpose of this research is to gather information which gives insight as to how physical education teachers in New Zealand create a learning community within a class. Ultimately this research knowledge may contribute and inform the physical education professions' body of knowledge about the practice of physical education teaching and learning and contribute to both pre-service and in-service teacher education.

Participants in the study

I wish to research your ideas and beliefs about how you develop your classes as learning communities. You will be required to participate in a 45 - 60 minute audio taped interview. There will be one 30 minute follow up interview at a later date for purposes of clarification of answers if required.

I also wish to run one focus group interview with eight of your students from one specific class to gather their understandings. In focus group interviews there are issues associated with confidentiality. While the students are well within their rights to discuss their role in the research, it will be explained to them that it is a requirement of their participation in this project to respect the confidentiality of other participants.

1. This project has received ethical approval from the University of Canterbury College of Education Ethical Clearance Committee.
2. Complaints may be addressed to:
Dr Missy Morton, Chair, Ethical Clearance Committee
College of Education, University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, CHRISTCHURCH

Telephone: 345 8312

I would then like to spend a maximum of ten hours watching one of your classes to gather information about both your actions as a teacher and the student's actions. All interviews and observations will take place at a venue of your choice. The interview will be audio-taped and you will be given a written copy to check for accuracy. You and the students will also receive a written account of the interviews to check for accuracy.

Keeping responses confidential

The results of this study may be submitted for publication to national and international journals or presented at conferences. The school and physical education department will not be identified in this study, you and the students will be given pseudonyms and all data gathered will be confidential. My supervisors, a transcriber and I will be the only people to view the information and all data will be kept securely in a locked filing cabinet at my work and a password protected computer. All data will be destroyed after a minimum of five years if no longer required.

Participation and the right to withdraw

What you can contribute to this study will be valued; and your participation is voluntary. If you agree to take part you may withdraw at any time while data is being gathered.

The University of Canterbury, College of Education Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this study. The College of Education requires that all participants be informed that if they have any complaint concerning the manner in which a research project is conducted, it may be given to the researcher or if an independent person is preferred, to:

The Chair
Ethical Clearance Committee
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch
Ph 3458312

Consent to participate in the study

If you agree to take part in this study please complete the enclosed consent form and post it to me in the reply paid envelope.

Yours sincerely

Sue McBain
Senior Lecturer

1 This project has received ethical approval from the University of Canterbury College of Education Ethical Clearance Committee. 2

2. Complaints may be addressed to:
Dr Missy Marlon, Chair, Ethical Clearance Committee
College of Education, University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, CHRISTCHURCH

Telephone: 345 8312

University of Canterbury

Supervisors

Dr Janinka Greenwood
School of Literacies and Arts in Education
College of Education
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch
Ph: 3642987
Email:
janinka.greenwood@canterbury.ac.nz

Ian Culpan
Head of School of Sciences and Physical
Education
College of Education
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch
Ph 3458132
Email: ian.culpan@canterbury.ac.nz

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Dr Missy Morton, Chair, Ethical Clearance Committee
College of Education, University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, CHRISTCHURCH

Telephone: 345 8312



Declaration of Consent

Physical Education Teacher Participant
Mr E

I have read the information regarding my participation in the study, The Development of Learning Communities in Physical Education.

I understand that:

- I will participate in two individual interviews;
- I will be observed for 10 hours with my year 9 class
- what I say will be audio taped and I will be able to view and comment on a written copy of the discussions for accuracy;;
- my participation is voluntary, and I may withdraw from the study at any time while data is being gathered;
- what I say will be confidential and my name will not be identified in any published report.

Name _____ Date _____

Signed _____

- 1 This project has received ethical approval from the University of Canterbury College of Education Ethical Clearance Committee. 4
2. Complaints may be addressed to:
Dr Missy Marlon, Chair, Ethical Clearance Committee
College of Education, University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, CHRISTCHURCH

Telephone: 345 8312

Appendix 2



The Development of Learning Communities in Physical Education. **Information for Students**

My name is Sue McBain. I am completing a Masters of Teaching and Learning at the University of Canterbury, College of Education, School of Sciences and Physical Education under the supervision of Ian Culpan, Principal Lecturer and Head of the School of Sciences and Physical Education and Dr Janinka Greenwood, Dean of Post Graduate Studies.

The aim of the project

Physical Education teachers often believe that a good teacher helps a class to learn cooperatively together and also helps people to learn how to "get on" with each other. The purpose of my research is to gather information which gives me some ideas as to how your physical education teacher develops this type of class environment.

Participants in the study

You are one of eight Year 9 students from Mr E's class who I am inviting to participate in one group interview with seven other students. This means that I will talk to everyone as a group and write down everyone's answers. In focus group interviews it is important to maintain confidentiality. While it is okay to discuss your role in the research, it is very important that you do not talk about anyone else's responses.

I would also like to watch your class for 10 hours. All interviews and observations will take place at the school. All the interviews will be video/audio-taped and typed up and then you will be given a written copy to check for accuracy.

Keeping responses confidential

The results of this study may be submitted for publication to national and international journals or presented at conferences. Everything you say and write will be kept confidential. Your school's name and physical education department will not be identified in the study and your real name will not be used in any situation including published reports. Only my supervisors (teachers), a typist and I will see the information gathered from you and all information will be locked up at my work in filing cabinet and in a password protected computer. All the information gathered from you will be destroyed after a minimum of five years if no longer required.

- 1 This project has received ethical approval from the University of Canterbury College of Education Ethical Clearance Committee. 5
2. Complaints may be addressed to:
Dr Missy Morton, Chair, Ethical Clearance Committee
College of Education, University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, CHRISTCHURCH

Telephone: 345 8312

Participation and the right to withdraw

What you contribute to this study will be valued, and your participation is voluntary. If you agree to take part you may withdraw at any time.

The University of Canterbury, College of Education Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this study. The College of Education requires that all participants be informed that if they have any complaint concerning the manner in which a research project is conducted, it may be given to the researcher or if an independent person is preferred, to the following:

The Chair
Ethical Clearance Committee
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch
Ph 3458312

Consent to participate in the study

If you agree to take part in this study please complete the enclosed consent form and post it to me in the reply paid envelope.

Yours sincerely

Sue McBain
Senior Lecturer
University of Canterbury

Supervisors

Dr Janinka Greenwood
School of Literacies and Arts in Education
College of Education
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch
Ph: 3642987
Email:
janinka.greenwood@canterbury.ac.nz

Ian Culpan
Head of School of Sciences and Physical
Education
College of Education
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch
Ph 3458132
Email: ian.culpan@canterbury.ac.nz

1 This project has received ethical approval from the University of Canterbury College of Education 6
Ethical Clearance Committee.

2. Complaints may be addressed to:
Dr Missy Marlon, Chair, Ethical Clearance Committee
College of Education, University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, CHRISTCHURCH

Telephone: 345 8312



Student Participant

I have read the information received regarding my participation in the study, "The Development of Learning Communities in Physical Education." My parents have also given their permission for me to take part.

I understand that:

- I will participate in a focus group interview;
- I will be audio/video recorded and I will be able to read a written copy of my answers to check for accuracy;
- My participation is voluntary and I may withdraw from the study at any time while data is being gathered;
- What I say will be confidential and I will not be identified in any situation including published reports.

Name _____

Date _____

Signed _____

1. This project has received ethical approval from the University of Canterbury College of Education Ethical Clearance Committee.

2. Complaints may be addressed to:
Dr Missy Marlon, Chair, Ethical Clearance Committee
College of Education, University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, CHRISTCHURCH

Telephone: 345 8312



The Development of Learning Communities in Physical Education.
Information for Parents/Guardians

My name is Sue McBain. I am completing a Masters of Teaching and Learning at the University of Canterbury, College of Education, School of Sciences and Physical Education under the supervision of Ian Culpan, Principal Lecturer and Head of the School of Sciences and Physical Education and Dr Janinka Greenwood, Dean of Post Graduate Studies.

The aim of the project

Physical Education teachers often believe that effective teachers' foster positive relationships within a caring, classroom environment. The purpose of this research is to gather information which gives insight as to how physical education teachers create such a learning community within a physical education class.

Participants in the study

Your daughter/son is one of eight Year 9 students from Mr E's class, who I am inviting to participate in one group interview. This means that I will talk to eight students as a group, which will be audio/video taped. In focus group interviews it is important for the students to maintain confidentiality. While it is okay for your daughter/son to discuss their role in the research, it is very important that they do not talk about anyone else's responses.

I will then watch your son/daughter's physical education class for 10 hours. All interviews and observations will take place at the school. All the interviews will be typed up and then your daughter/son will be given a written copy to check for accuracy.

Keeping responses confidential

The results of this study may be submitted for publication to national and international journals or presented at conferences. Everything your son/daughter says and writes will be confidential. The school's name and physical education department will not be identified in the study and their real name will not be used in any situation including published reports. Only my supervisors, a transcriber and I will see the information gathered and all data will be stored securely at my work in a

1. This project has received ethical approval from the University of Canterbury College of Education Ethical Clearance Committee.
2. Complaints may be addressed to:
Dr Missy Morton, Chair, Ethical Clearance Committee
College of Education, University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, CHRISTCHURCH

Telephone: 345 8312

locked filing cabinet and in a password protected computer. All data will be destroyed after a minimum of five years if no longer required.

Participation and the right to withdraw

What your daughter/son contributes to this study will be valued, and their participation is voluntary. If s/he agrees to take part, s/he may withdraw at any time while data is being gathered.

The University of Canterbury, College of Education Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved this study. The College of Education requires that all participants be informed that if they have any complaint concerning the manner in which a research project is conducted, it may be given to the researcher or if an independent person is preferred, to the following:

The Chair
Ethical Clearance Committee
University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch
Ph 3458312

Consent to participate in the study

If you agree to take part in this study please complete the enclosed consent form and post it to me in the reply paid envelope.

Yours sincerely

Sue McBain
Senior Lecturer
University of Canterbury

Supervisors

Dr Janinka Greenwood
School of Literacies and Arts in Education
College of Education
University of Canterbury
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Ph: 3642987
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Dr Missy Morton, Chair, Ethical Clearance Committee
College of Education, University of Canterbury
Private Bag 4800, CHRISTCHURCH

Telephone: 345 8312

Declaration of Consent

Parent/Guardian

I have read the information regarding my son's/daughter's participation in this study.

I understand that: _____ (students name) will participate in focus group interviews;

- what s/he says will be audio/video recorded and s/he will be able to view a written copy of the discussions for accuracy;
- her/his participation is voluntary and I may withdraw her/him from the study at any time while data is being gathered;
- what my son/daughter says will be confidential and he/she will not be identified in any situation including published reports.

I am satisfied that _____ understands what will be required of her/him in the study. I give permission for _____ to participate in the study: 'The Development of Learning Communities in Physical Education

‘.

Name: _____ Date _____

Signed: _____

Appendix 3

What is the most memorable thing you learned about in Physical Education this year?

- ~~about~~ The role mental physical Social spiritual thing has been infused alot all year
- dancing was heaps of Fun
- I like the chances i have had to ~~be~~ bring leadership skills throw

What things does M/E do to help you learn in Physical Education?

- doesn't spend all day telling people of he just kind shames them out.
- let us just get on with it but explains it well first.
- uses alot of the social spiritual physical and mental stuff.

"YOUR PE CLASS"

What things do other students "do" to help you to enjoy physical education and to also learn?

Just make games heaps of fun people put in effort so its not boring

What do you do to help other people enjoy Physical Education classes and to learn?

encourage them
give them help if they can't do something
be a leader take control (when needed)
Sheer things around eg touch.

Name
Secret Name: Alexius ~~Thorn~~
Age: 14.



What is the most memorable thing you learned about in Physical Education this year?

How to play touch and help other people learn

What things does Mr E do, to help you learn in Physical Education?

explains things really clearly.

"Your PE Class"

What things do other students "do" to help you to enjoy physical education and to also learn?

Helps you if you don't know some thing and teaches you some ~~the~~ thing

What do you do to help other people enjoy Physical Education classes and to learn?

take a ~~foot~~ roll in helping them with things they don't know and I do.



Name

Secret Name: ~~Logan~~ Logan

Age: 14

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